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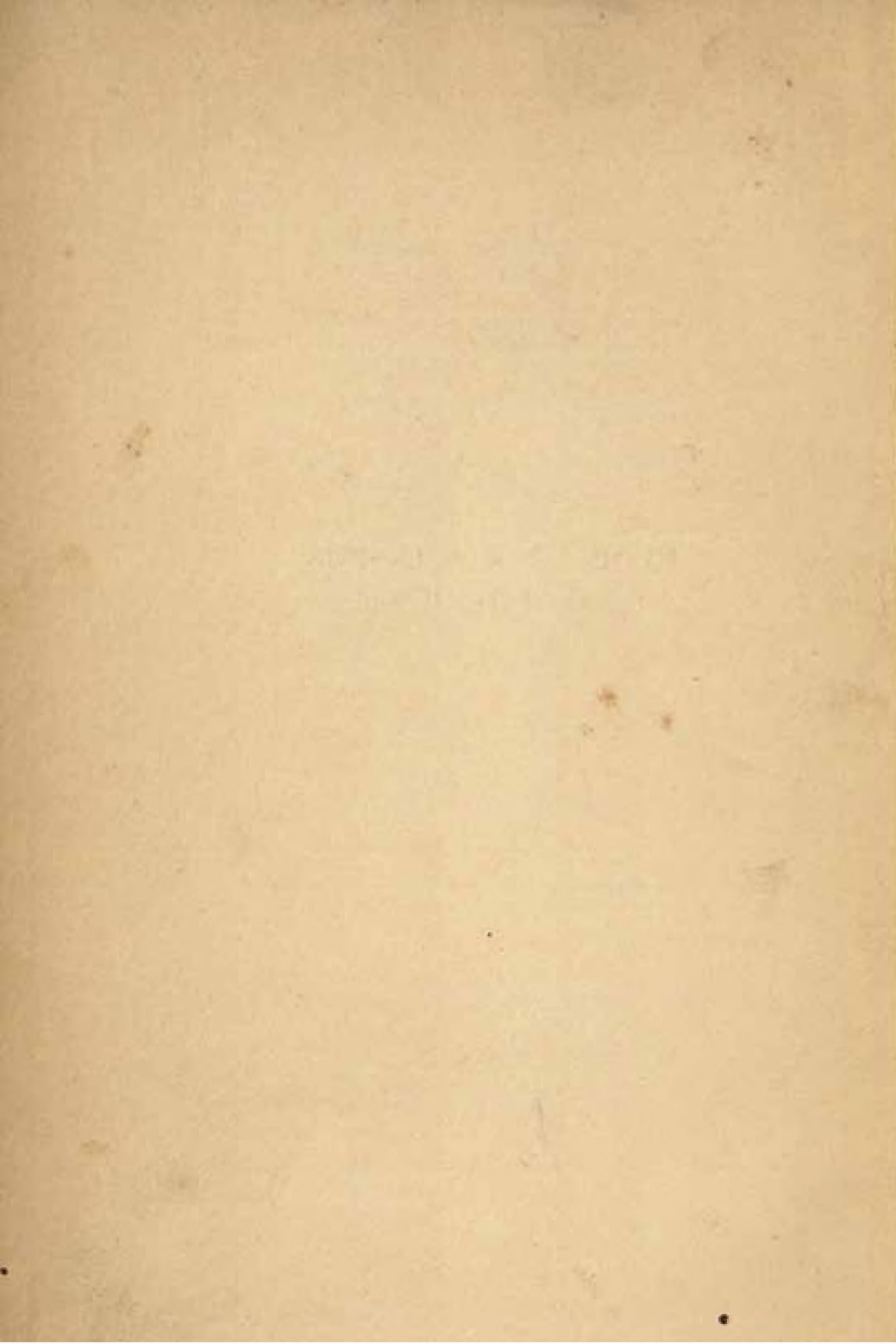
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MYTHS FROM MELANESIA  
AND INDONESIA















1898

CROSSING THE BRIG O' DREAD

# MYTHS · FROM MELANESIA · AND INDONESIA



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*By*  
DONALD A.  
MACKENZIE

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## PREFACE

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This volume deals with the myths and the associated religious beliefs and practices of those extensive island groups known as Melanesia and Indonesia. Comparative notes are provided and these tend to emphasize that the question of race should not be confused with that of a culture. We find, for instance, on one hand, groups of mixed peoples perpetuating similar religious doctrines and ceremonies, and, on the other, different branches of a more homogeneous people, among whom alien types constitute a small minority, displaying divergencies of decided character, suggesting that the islanders, as a whole, have been subjected to varying cultural influences. Certain outstanding myths and practices can be traced to outside areas inhabited by representatives of different races.

Nor apparently should language be confused with either race or culture. We find that considerable groups of the island peoples, although differing in physical characters, "speak languages which", as a philologist reminds us, "are branches of a common stock".

In view of these arresting and suggestive facts and the great mass of fresh evidence of late made available by specialists who have conducted intensive studies of circumscribed localities, it nowadays seems extremely hazardous to accept the complacent theory, formerly so fashionable, that "man in a savage state", as Hugh Miller put it, "is the same animal everywhere, and his



constructive powers, whether employed in the formation of a legendary story, or of a battle-axe, seem to expatiate almost everywhere in the same rugged track of invention. For," Miller added, borrowing the stratification theory from the science of geology, "even the traditions of this first stage may be identified, like its weapons of war, all the world over." We must, however, avoid the pitfalls of a system of investigation which prompts one to designate as "primitive" or "natural" any particular doctrine, ceremony, or myth, simply because it happens to be found among a "savage" or backward people, especially when it can be shown to have elsewhere a definite history which throws light on its original significance and, as is the case in some instances, can be proved to have had its origin in a civilized rather than a primitive community. It is possible for us to make a somewhat misleading and loose application of the term "savage". Indeed, when we come to deal with the Melanesians, who have been drawn upon by some writers for evidence of "primitive beliefs", the question arises whether they should rightly be regarded as an "uncivilized" or a "decivilized" people. It would appear that many of their religious myths, doctrines, and practices, as well as certain of their crafts, did not have spontaneous origin in their present area of occupation. The fact cannot be overlooked that they could not have reached their islands until after deep-sea boats had been invented and the science of navigation sufficiently well advanced to permit of them undertaking long voyages of exploration. Part, at least, of the ancestral stock of the mixed peoples must have come under the influence of a comparatively high civilization. A process of degeneration subsequently ensued, especially after loss of direct contact with the instructors, and, no doubt, it was in some measure rendered inevitable by fusions with backward peoples. Interesting evidence in this connexion is certainly not wanting. On some islands, for

instance, we find groups of "bush folk", the descendants of ancient navigators, who have long ceased to frequent the sea; island shore-dwellers who build and use smaller boats than those in which their colonizing ancestors arrived; while other natives, although descended from accomplished stone-builders, are found to have long ceased to work stone. We can, in certain myths and legends, detect haunting memories of lost crafts and discarded habits of life. In this particular connexion there are many interesting data in Melanesia and Indonesia. We find, for example, that in some islands the imported practice of mummification has had tardy survival until a comparatively recent date, while in others we meet with only memories embedded in those myths which tell that immortality or longevity is to be achieved by the performance of some vital part of the ancient embalming process. The lore and customs connected with standing stones are similarly of highly suggestive character. Until recently elaborate ceremonies were performed at megalithic structures like the "Nanga" of Fiji, while in New Guinea we find the stone circle regarded as a sanctuary for visiting strangers, or used as a place of assembly and as a court of justice like the Anatolian and south-eastern European circles referred to by Homer. Other survivals include the custom of head-hunting which, as is shown, was formerly unrestricted by the barriers of race; the Indonesian worship of jars, with its intimate connexion with dragon-worship which cannot be regarded as "primitive" in the real sense of the term; the stories and beliefs regarding the Paradises of the sky-world and the underworld, which have a history rooted in centres of ancient civilization, and the associated ideas regarding twin-souls and the influence exercised by the dead in their relations with the living.

Of especial interest with regard to the diffusion of cultural elements from areas of origin and development



is the religious treatment of the pig which, in this volume, is accorded comparative study at some length. Evidence has been gleaned from all parts of Oceania (Indonesia, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia), and likewise from various areas in Asia, Europe, and Africa. It will be found that there has thus been explored a helpful and compensating line of research. Apparently the pig was at an early period closely associated with the agricultural mode of life and therefore with the religious ideas reflecting the experiences and speculations of the agriculturists. In centres of ancient civilization it was identified with such complex deities as Tammuz, Osiris, Adonis, and Attis, and similar connexions were effected in Persia and India. We find the pig in like manner connected with complex deities in Oceania and interesting and significant lore regarding dragon-like boars, blue pigs, black pigs, souls as pigs, sky-pigs, &c. Evidently the seafarers who imported the domesticated pig into Oceania carried with it a heritage of old-world lore veined by the influences of various localities.

Comparative study is likewise accorded to the Oceanic customs of betel-nut chewing and Kava drinking. Similar customs are shown to be of great antiquity and wide distribution.

In this volume will be found a good deal of valuable evidence for the extension of the study of human behaviour, of survivals and of the migrations of culture, and little tendency to account for all phenomena by speculating regarding that greatest of all mysteries, the workings of the human mind.

DONALD A. MACKENZIE.

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# MYTHS FROM MELANESIA AND INDONESIA

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## CHAPTER I

### The Tragedies of Disease

War and Disease—Ravages of Imported Disease in New World—Toll taken in Pacific Islands—Melanesians dying out—Yaws and other Diseases in New Hebrides, Fiji, and Solomons—Results of Contact in Carolines and Yap—Depopulation of South-east Solomons—Diseases introduced in Fiji, &c.—Punitive Expeditions—Evils of European Clothing—False Modesty—Missionary criticizes Missionaries—Early Missionaries blamed by Natives for Diseases—Introduction of English Cottage—Missionaries clothing the Natives—Hat-wearing as an Advance towards Civilization—The "Psychological Factor" in Depopulation Problem—Native Loss of Interest in Life—Racial Suicide—Ravages of Imported Disease in Polynesia—Missionaries Hopes not Realized—Longevity in Pre-Christian Times—Native Physicians—Manipulative Surgery—Operation of Trepanning—Brain-grafting Operation.

We hear much in these days of the peril of war to civilization and of the terrible toll it takes of human life among not only combatants but non-combatants. Yet in the history of mankind we find disease to be an even greater destructive influence. It may be less spectacular, but it is more difficult to arrest and control, and it is much more deadly. Once an unfamiliar imported disease seizes upon a people who are ignorant as to methods of



treatment and physically unable to resist its onslaught, it spreads like flame and leaves desolation and misery in its wake.

After Columbus had discovered America the germs of disease carried from the Old World wrought infinitely more destruction than did the weapons of the Spaniards. Even as early as the sixteenth century the island of San Domingo was depopulated by smallpox. Other islands had tragic experiences of the same disease, and they have since suffered so much from other imported diseases that to-day the native Caribs are all but extinct throughout the West Indies.

When Cortez was engaged in the conquest of Mexico smallpox was imported by a Negro slave from the fleet of Narvaez. One of the conqueror's friends, Maxixca, lord of Tlascala, contracted the disease and died. "He had fallen a victim," says Prescott, "to that terrible epidemic the smallpox, which was now sweeping over the land like fire over the prairies, smiting down prince and peasant, and adding another to the long train of woes that followed the march of the white man." From Tlascala it reached the Aztec capital. "Thence it swept down towards the borders of the Pacific, leaving its path strewn with the dead bodies of natives who, in the strong language of a contemporary,<sup>1</sup> perished in heaps, like cattle stricken with the murrain."<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that the death-roll reached the total of about three and a half millions.

The Red Indians have declined in numbers mainly on account of the ravages of disease. Some tribes have entirely disappeared. "Thirty millions of white men," wrote Catalin of the United States in 1841, "are now scuffling for the goods and luxuries of life over the bones

<sup>1</sup> Sahagun.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, Book V, Chapter VI.

of twelve millions of red men, six millions of whom have fallen victims to smallpox."

In the Pacific a similar tragic story is told—the story of gradual depopulation in consequence of native contact with European civilization. A traditional Polynesian saying, melancholy in sound as in import, is sadly appropriate in this connexion:

"E tupu te fau, e toro te farero, e mou te taata."

"The hibiscus tree shall grow, the coral shall spread out its branches, but man shall cease."

As Ellis, who quotes the saying, explains, the *fau* (hibiscus) is a tree of rapid growth and the *farero* (the branching coral) spreads more quickly than any of the corallines.<sup>1</sup>

The natives are steadily decreasing in numbers in Melanesia as well as in Polynesia. "There is little doubt that unless something can be done, and done speedily," writes a missionary regarding Santa Cruz and the Reef Islands, "the native population will in another twenty years have almost died out."<sup>2</sup>

But in some places it is almost too late to do anything. One of the most melancholy modern instances of rapid depopulation is afforded by Ontong Java or Luanuia, an outlying atoll of the Solomons group. "Of an estimated population of 5000 in 1907," we are told, there only survive (in 1928) five hundred and sixty-eight." This decline appears to be due mainly to the "labour traffic" which results in the importation of the disease, the abandonment of native habits and the acquirement of European, and especially European vices.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Researches* (First Edition), Vol. II, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. W. C. O'Ferrall in *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, Cambridge, 1922, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Nature*, 23rd June, 1928, p. 1001.



In Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia the disease known as "yaws" (medically called Framboesia) is very prevalent. It causes red eruptions and is said to be related to syphilis and, like it, to be curable by the No. 606 medicine. According to Mr. C. M. Woodford it occurs in the New Hebrides, and is common in the Solomons and Fiji.<sup>1</sup> Dr. MacMillan Brown says "it was amongst the natives of the Pacific Islands when Europeans arrived". The same writer blames the old whalers for introducing syphilis and other venereal diseases "that are decimating the Marshall Islands and will in time depopulate them". In the Carolines "close on 100 per cent of the population suffer from ankylostomiasis, a mysterious and exhausting disease that gets into the blood from parasites penetrating through the skin of any part of the body". Dr. MacMillan Brown adds that "it is of comparatively recent introduction into the archipelago and must have been brought into it by some of its men who had been abroad serving as sailors". Tuberculosis is the most virulent disease in Western Micronesia. Thirty years ago, when the Spaniards began to visit the island of Yap, there were 16,000 inhabitants, and now there are fewer than 7000. Even the coco-nuts are perishing owing to the introduction of a parasite (a species of phylloxera) which eats all through a tree. It was introduced by a Spanish steamer from Manilla.<sup>2</sup> Dr. W. C. Ivens, writing of the Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands, says that "every child throughout Mala and Ulawa suffers from yaws, *aloe*". He adds:

"The disease comes when the child is only a few years old, and may leave disfiguring and disabling sores as a result. In the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, pp. 72-3.

<sup>2</sup> J. MacMillan Brown, *Peoples and Problems of the Pacific*, Vol. I. pp. 124-5.

Pwaloto district of Little Mala yaws do not appear sometimes till after marriage, much to the shame of the sufferers, who keep themselves out of sight."

Dealing with the population of Mala, Dr. Ivens says it is at present about 65,000, and he continues:

"In the past the population was much greater, and the white man must be held responsible for a considerable diminution in the numbers of the people. Mala was a great recruiting ground for the vessels of the Labour Trade, and, since the cessation of the Trade, dysentery and influenza spread from visiting ships have caused considerable mortality on Mala. I estimated in 1896 that Sa'a had a population of 250 people, but in 1924, the numbers had been reduced to 100 owing to various epidemics of dysentery and influenza. The heavy mortality among children is probably owing to hookworm and yaws."<sup>1</sup>

In 1896 a Government report was issued at Suva, Fiji, giving the results of an Inquiry regarding the "Decrease of the Native Population". It shows that although the birth-rate was higher than that of England and Wales, the infantile death-rate was more than three times heavier than that of London. More than half the deaths in Fiji in 1891 were those of children.

Large numbers of children die in the Solomons, too, and the death-rate among adults is, owing to the prevalence of imported diseases, said to be "excessive". Mr. C. M. Woodford, late Resident Commissioner, gives a melancholy account of the tragic inroads of disease:

"Measles, dysentery and whooping cough have been the most fatal epidemic diseases in Fiji. Forty thousand died of measles in the great epidemic of 1875; whooping cough in 1884 killed three thousand and epidemic influenza and whooping cough in 1891 accounted for fifteen hundred deaths.

"Smallpox, so far as I know, has never occurred in the Western

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands*, London, 1927, pp. 20, 23.



Pacific, in spite of a recent assertion that it has, nor, considering the rarity of its occurrence in Australasia and the rigorous measures taken for its suppression, is it likely to occur.

"The Solomons have been happily spared such a fatal epidemic of measles as that referred to above. . . . Dysentery of a most severe type is the most rapidly fatal disease in the Solomons. Death has been known to occur within three days of the attack. It is supposed in Fiji to have been an introduced disease. Whether that is the case in the Solomons it is impossible to say. One recent instance is known where it was certainly introduced from outside by a labour ship.

"Influenza and the diseases resulting from it are responsible for many deaths in the Solomons, and this disease is undoubtedly introduced afresh from time to time by ships."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. W. J. Durrad, who served many years as a missionary in the Torres and Banks Islands, writes strongly as follows regarding the tragedy of Melanesia:

"The Resident Commissioners are more of the nature of glorified policemen than rulers. Their actions seem mainly confined to punitive measures and expeditions. Natives die by the thousand as the result of the white man's acts and nothing is done. One white man dies by the hands of some lawless natives and instantly the authorities are awake, the native police are marched out, men-o'-war steam up, and the misguided natives are hunted to death, their gardens trampled down, their pigs shot, their villages desolated. Of positive help towards a better life these people receive nothing."<sup>2</sup>

An outstanding cause of death, owing to contracted disease and ignorance, is the use of European clothing. "Before the advent of Europeans," writes Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, "the people of some islands went wholly nude or wore only garments, if they can be so called, which fulfilled neither of the two chief purposes for

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, Cambridge, 1922, pp. 69 et seq.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

which the clothing of civilized people is designed. In other parts the native clothing consisted of petticoats, loin-cloths, or other simple garments thoroughly adapted to the necessities of the climate." But when the Melanesian adopts European clothing he bathes in them and "instead of changing his garments frequently, wears them continuously till they are ragged, and even when new clothing is obtained, it is put over the old".<sup>1</sup>

In the Torres and Banks Islands the evils due to wearing European clothing are not confined to adults. The Rev. W. J. Durrad tells that babies are carried either in their mothers' arms or astride their hips and come into contact with dirty clothing. "I know of no spectacle more wretched," he writes, "than to see a tiny child, covered with sores and whimpering with misery and discomfort, being carried on a soaking wet day on the back of a woman whose garments are a sodden mass."<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. W. J. Durrad is not sparing in his criticism of some of the missionaries. He says that "a false modesty" is being cultivated by them among the natives. "We have to rid ourselves of the idea," he insists, "that clothes make for a higher morality. It is by no means so. A Raga woman in an abbreviated mat skirt of native make is every bit as moral as a Banks' Island woman with a bodice and a long skirt reaching to the ankles. Some of the most prudish women are not renowned for a very virtuous life." He laments that one particular Mission's representatives in the islands of the New Hebrides "teach their adherents that no one can be a Christian who does not wear shirt and trousers".<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Felix Speiser, dealing especially with the New Hebrides, declares that "European food and clothes add

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, Cambridge, 1922, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.



indirectly to the death-roll as agents in the spread of disease. . . . Very few natives realize the danger of spending the day in wet clothes, and rarely change them when wet. Women frequently wear several dresses which are often soaked on rainy days. The people usually work and sleep in the same suit of clothes."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. C. M. Woodford, late Resident Commissioner in the British Solomon Islands, also writes of "the injudicious use of unsuitable clothing" which he has found to be "a fruitful cause of disease". The natives rarely wash the European clothing they acquire, but wear them until "they disintegrate into a network of holes and rags". Mr. Woodford says they should be taught "to do without body clothing", especially in the Solomons. "The sight of a healthy skin," he says, "is more decent than that of a dirty shirt."<sup>2</sup>

Modern housing also breeds disease. The old native house was more suitable for the islanders than the European houses they have been taught to erect, but do not know how to keep clean.

One obtains vivid glimpses of the conditions prevailing in the South Sea Islands, when white men were extending their influence, in the missionary reports of the middle of last century. Messrs. Hardie and Murray, for instance, reporting on the Western Polynesian missions, told of their visit to Tanna in September, 1849:

"We made this island on Wednesday the 19th; and here we had to listen to a mournful tale. Since the last voyage all the teachers and their families had been very ill. Three of the teachers and three of their children had died, and most of the survivors were still in bad health; in consequence of which one of our stations was abandoned. The state of things among the natives generally was far from encouraging. For two or three months after the last

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, Cambridge, 1922, pp. 30-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 69 et seq.



visit, considerable numbers attended the services on the Sabbath at the several stations. Successive epidemics then took place; first disease of the eyes, then of the chest, fever, &c.; and by these many were carried off. For these and other evils the teachers were blamed; and the consequence was a general abandonment of them and their message. From that time Sabbath was not observed at any of the stations. . . . Diseases were still very frequent and often fatal to many; and whether they happened among the people or the pigs, their causes and consequences were ascribed to the teachers. . . . The people at the different stations threatened to kill them. Their plantations and houses at some of the stations were destroyed, and they themselves had to take refuge at the houses of the chiefs."<sup>1</sup>

When in 1848 Messrs. Turner and Nisbet visited Niue or Savage Island, they were informed that when a native teacher reached it in a sailing ship and put ashore in a Samoan canoe, the people were opposed to his landing, "saying that the foreign wood would cause disease among them". He pointed out that the wood was the same as grew on their own island, and as to himself, he said, "You know this is my country; I am not a god, I am just like yourselves, and have no control over disease." This teacher, Peniamina, had been taken by an American whaler from Savage Island to Samoa, where he was converted under the influence of Mr. Mills, the missionary of Apia.<sup>2</sup>

"The natives," Mr. Murray records, "had a great dread of disease and they had an idea that if foreigners were admitted among them they would introduce disease; and when any of themselves left the island and returned, they were regarded in much the same light as foreigners and in consequence were in nearly as much danger."

The early missionaries were much to blame for

<sup>1</sup> Rev. A. W. Murray, *Wonders in the Western Isles*, London, 1874, pp. 213-4.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. A. W. Murray, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-8.

encouraging the natives to imitate European habits. Those who, for instance, went out in the *Duff* to the South Sea Islands sincerely thought they were doing good work by introducing what Ellis refers to with satisfaction as "a new order of architectutre". This famous missionary and anthropologist quotes with relish an account of the missionary "reforms" by Captain Gambier of H.M.S. *Dauntless* in which the following passage occurs:

"The queen and her daughter-in-law, dressed in English fashion, received us in their neat little cottage. The furniture of her house was all made on the island, and by the natives, with a little instruction originally from the missionaries. It consisted of sofas with backs and arms, with (cinet) bottoms, really very well constructed; tables and bedsteads by the same artificers. There were curtains in the windows, made of thin white cloth, with dark leaves stained upon it for a border, which gave a comfortable air to the rooms. . . . As we stopped occasionally to speak to some of the natives standing near their huts, we had frequent opportunities of observing the value they set upon the comforts of our English style of cottage and other things introduced among them of late."<sup>1</sup>

The wives of the early missionaries busied themselves in making native women wear European attire. Ellis tells that "the first hats and bonnets ever made in the islands and worn by the natives were made by Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Threlkeld in the spring of 1820", and the male missionaries "highly approving of whatever had a tendency to civilize the natives . . . rejoiced at their introduction". The island ladies were at first puzzled and astonished by the European custom of wearing such novel types of head-dress. According to Ellis they were "by no means sparing in their remarks", and he goes on to say: "Some observed they were perhaps designed to

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Ellis in *Polynesian Researches* (First Edition), Vol. II, pp. 77-8.



keep the head cool; others to keep it warm; and others supposed they were to preserve it from the flies and mosquitoes. All agreed that they looked very strange."<sup>1</sup> Ellis adds that "wearing a hat and bonnet was the first advance they made towards a more civilized appearance and dress", but some complained that although they had bonnets they were "still without shoes and stockings".<sup>2</sup> The natives began to purchase foreign clothing and from the beginning were partial to woollen cloth. "At one time," Ellis tells, "no article of dress was more acceptable to the men than a thick shaggy great-coat."<sup>3</sup> European clothing was obtained from ships and American traders, and second-hand clothing was sent out from Britain by various organizations. With the clothing were imported the germs of tuberculosis and other diseases, and these have been aggravated by wearing damp clothing in heated houses.

Other causes of the rapid decline in the population of the South Sea Islands is venereal disease, introduced by sailors and others, and the free use of alcohol. Dr. Rivers says that although it has been made an offence to sell or give alcohol to a native, it is still "potent as a cause of disease and death in the New Hebrides". The introduction of fire-arms for use in native wars has likewise caused many deaths.

Dr. W. H. R. Rivers deals in his paper "The Psychological Factor"<sup>4</sup> with an aspect of the Melanesian depopulation problem which is a revelation to the European mind. "It may at first sight seem far-fetched," he says, "to suppose that such a factor as loss of interest in life could ever produce the dying out of a people, but my own observations have led me to the conclusion that

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, *op. cit.*, pp. 125, 131-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 132-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, edited by W. H. R. Rivers, Cambridge, 1922, pp. 84 *et seq.*



its influence is so great that it can hardly be overrated." Dr. Rivers, with whom the writer had the privilege of discussing this very topic when he was doing valuable psychological work in military hospitals during the Great War, proceeds to tell how frequently Melanesians die with apparent ease. "A native who is ill," he says, "loses heart at once. He has no desire to live, and perhaps announces that he is going to die when the onlooker can see no ground for his belief. . . . The evidence is overwhelming that such people as the Melanesians will sicken and die in a few hours or days as the result of the belief that an enemy has chosen them as the victim of his spells, or that they have, wittingly or unwittingly, offended against some religious taboo."

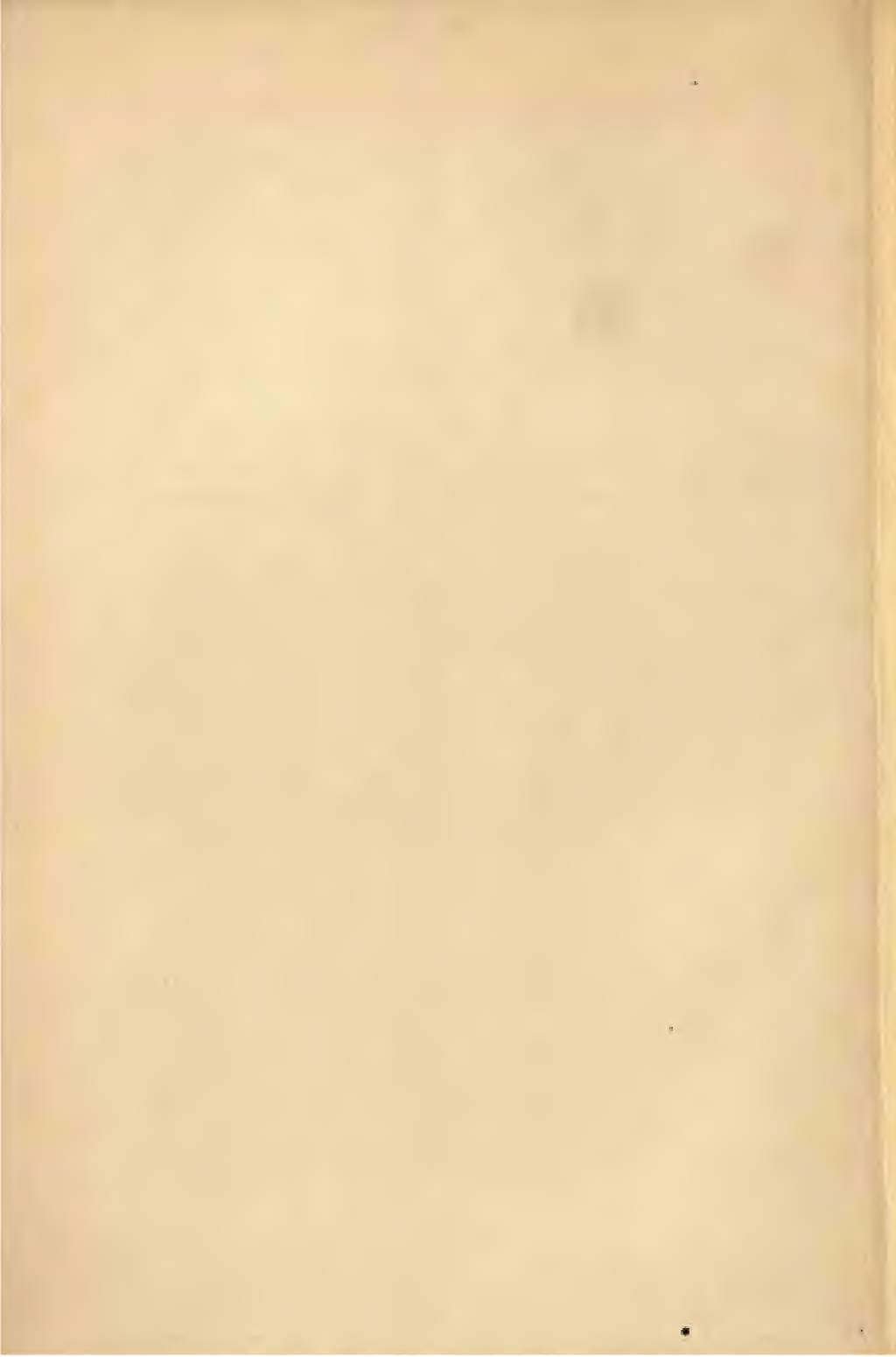
The parts of Melanesia in which natives display a lack of interest in life and the ordinary desire to live, are chiefly those which have come under European influence. The "old zest and interest in life" persists in other areas and there "the people are still vigorous and abundant". These are the islands on which white men are either absent or have not changed the conditions of life, and also the islands where the natives are Christians by conviction and not merely because Christianity is "the religion of the powerful white man". Dr. Rivers suggests how the Melanesian may be encouraged to renew his interest in life after all his old customs have been suppressed. "One of the chief needs of Melanesia," he says, "is that the native shall be given a real interest in the economic development of his country." He reminds us that "the old life of the people was permeated through and through by interests of a religious kind", and he proceeds to say:

"The economic life of the people of Melanesia is being profoundly modified by external influence, but it is doubtful whether



Photo J. Harris, Auckland.

# FIJIANS MAKING FIRE





the close relation between economic and religious interests will disappear. It is essential that the missionary shall face this problem and make up his mind concerning the attitude he is going to adopt towards the economic life of the people. In the past many of the best missionaries have set their faces against mixing economic problems with their religion."

Dr. Rivers insists that the problem involved must be faced, and he thinks "the best course is one in which Government and missionary societies join in common council to decide how they can avert the disappearance of the Melanesian", and he adds, "something must be done, and done quickly, to give him that renewed interest in life to which the health of peoples is mainly due".

The "psychological factor" is evidently one of great importance. When a people droop and despair and cease to take an interest in life, they are doomed to pass away. Many Melanesians have to be brought again to the viewpoint that it is "worth while to bring children into the world".

Disease and the evils attending the worst form of what is known as "the labour traffic" are apparently therefore not the only causes of depopulation. The Melanesians have to be protected against "racial suicide". Dr. Rivers found signs in some areas that, owing to enlightened treatment, the downward movement was being arrested and that the people were showing "signs of growth". But much headway has yet to be made.

In Polynesia, as in Melanesia, the toll taken by imported diseases has been heavy. Ellis wrote in 1829 in this connexion:

"The depopulation that has taken place during the last two or three generations, viz. since their discovery, may be easily accounted for. In addition to a disease, which as a desolating scourge, spread, unpalliated and unrestrained, its unsightly and fatal influence

among the people, two others are reported to have been carried thither—one by the crew of the *Vancouver* in 1790, and the other by means of the *Britannia*, an English whaler, in 1807. Both these disorders spread through the islands; the former almost as fatal as the plague, the latter affecting nearly every individual throughout all the islands of the group. The maladies originally prevailing among them appear, compared with those by which they are now afflicted, to have been few in number and mild in character.”<sup>1</sup>

Ellis goes on to say that the use of fire-arms and the introduction of distillation with “the extensive use of ardent spirits” likewise contributed to the depopulation of the Society Islands. But even before the arrival of the European missionaries the population was declining. Ellis “often heard the chiefs speak of themselves and the natives as only a small *toea*, remainder”. The contributing causes of the reduction of the population were infanticide, war, and human sacrifices. Ellis believed that after the introduction of Christianity the “destructive causes” would be removed. “There is now,” he wrote, “every ground to indulge the expectation that the population will become greater than it has been in any former period in their history; and it is satisfactory, in connexion with this anticipation, to know that the extent of soil capable of cultivation and other resources are adequate to the maintenance of a population tenfold increased above its present numbers.” But in Polynesia, as in Melanesia, this hope has unhappily not been fulfilled.

Ellis found that the longevity of the islanders in his time was not inferior to that of Europeans. He writes in this connexion:

“When the missionaries arrived in the *Duff* (1797) there were

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Researches* (First Edition), Vol. II, p. 33.



natives on the island who could recollect the visit of Captain Wallis; he was there in 1767. There are, in both the Sandwich and Society Islands, individuals who can recollect Captain Cook's visit which is fifty years ago;<sup>1</sup> there are also two now in the islands that were taken away in the *Bounty* forty years since, and these individuals do not look more aged, nor even so far advanced in years, as others that may be seen. The opinion of those missionaries who have been longest in the islands is that many reach the age of seventy years or upwards."

Ellis found that "the diseases formerly prevailing among the South Sea Islands were comparatively few" and that "the most fatal are, according to their (the islanders') account, of recent origin".<sup>2</sup> According to native belief "the gods were supposed to send all the diseases with which they were afflicted" and accordingly the physicians were the priests and sorcerers.

"From the gods the priests pretended to have received the knowledge of the healing art, and to them a part of the fee of the physician was considered to belong. No animal or mineral substances were admitted into their pharmacopœia; vegetable substances alone were used, and these simply pulverized, infused, heated on fire, or with red-hot stones and often fermented. Many of their applications, however, were very powerful, especially a species of gourd or wild cucumber."

A preparation, in which coco-nut pulp was a principal ingredient, was, however, "sometimes followed by instant death". A number of ceremonies were performed when remedies were applied.

Surgeons were "remarkably dexterous in closing a cut or thrust by drawing the edges carefully together, and applying the pungent juice of the ape (*arum costatum*) to the surface". Ellis continues:

<sup>1</sup> Ellis wrote in 1820 and Cook was killed in 1779.

<sup>2</sup> *Polynesian Researches* (First Edition) Vol. II p. 270 et seq.



"A fractured limb they set without much trouble, applying splinters of bamboo-cane to the sides and binding it up till it was healed. A dislocation they usually succeeded in reducing; but the other parts of their surgical practice were marked by a rude promptness, temerity and barbarism almost incredible. A man one day fell from a tree and dislocated some part of his neck. His companions, on perceiving it, instantly took him up: one of them placed his head between his own knees and held it firmly, while the others taking hold of his body, twisted the joint into its proper place."

On another occasion a man, who was assisting in carrying large stones suspended on a pole which rested on the shoulders of each bearer, so injured his vertebræ that he could scarcely move. "He had, as they expressed it, *fati te tua*, broken the back." Ellis tells how this man was treated:

"His fellow-workmen laid him flat on his face on the grass; one grasped and pulled his shoulders and the other his legs, while a third actually pressed with both knees his whole weight upon the back where the bones appeared displaced. It was not far from Mr. Barff's house where the accident occurred, and, observing the people assembling, he went to inquire the cause and saw them thus engaged. On his asking what they were doing, they coolly replied that they were only straightening the man's back which had been broken in with carrying stones. The vertebræ appeared to be replaced; they bound a long girdle repeatedly round his body, led him home, and, without any other treatment, he was in a short time able to resume his employment."

The operation of trepanning (removing a portion of bone from the skull) was practised with success. Ellis relates that on the island of Borabora there were persons living on whom skull operations had been performed, "the bones of the skull having been fractured in battle, they have cleared away the skin and coverings, and, having removed the fractured piece of bone, have care-

fully fitted in a piece of coco-nut shell and replaced the covering and skin ". The native surgeons used as lances a thorn from " a kind of bramble " or " a shark's tooth "; and were clever at opening an abscess.

Ellis was sceptical regarding one astonishing type of operation regarding which he writes:

" It is also related, although I confess I can scarcely believe it, that on some occasions, when the brain has been injured as well as the bone, they have opened the skull, taken out the injured portion of the brain, and, having a pig ready, have killed it, taken out the pig's brains, put them in the man's head and covered them up. They persist in stating that this has been done; but add that the persons always became furious with madness and died."<sup>1</sup>

But although the islanders of other days made daring surgical experiments and were able to cure some local afflictions, they have fallen ready victims to imported diseases. Withal, the vices of the white man's civilization have exercised a more profound and widespread influence than the virtues. It will not be to our credit if we fail to make reparations in the future.

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* (First Edition), Vol. II, p. 277

## CHAPTER II

### The Mixed Melanesian Peoples

A Vague Racial Term—Strains in Melanesian Stock—Tall and Short Types—Variations in Features—Races and Languages—Asiatic and Indo-European Influences—Papuan and Malayans—Original Home of Melanesians—Relations with Polynesians—Islanders as Correct Grammarians—Classification of Oceanic Languages—The Question of Borrowing—Were Melanesians Earlier Settlers than Polynesians?—Traces of Pre-Melanesians—Blonds in Oceania—Fair Types in Folk-tales—Fair Gods and Fair Foreigners—Traces of Phœnicians and Greeks?—Tall Fair Aliens among Dark Peoples—Blonds in New Guinea and Malay—Oceanic Custom of Lining the Hair—European Powdered Wigs—The Fair Celts Lined their Hair—Fair Aristocrats of Easter Islands—"Blancos" of the Carolines—Fair Asiatics—Origin of Oceanic Blonds.

Melanesia embraces New Guinea and a number of groups of islands lying between Micronesia and Australia, including the Admiralty Islands, New Ireland, New Britain, the Bismarck Archipelago, the Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides, the New Caledonia and Loyalty groups, and the Fiji Islands. The racial term applied to the islands is derived from *mēlāneus* ("black one") and was first used to distinguish their inhabitants from the fairer Polynesians. These, however, are not homogeneous but of mixed types—Papuan and negroes, with strains of Malayan and Polynesian stocks that vary in intensity in different localities. In New Guinea there are, in addition to Papuans, pygmies of negro type. Small minorities of blonds also occur in localities.

Dr. A. C. Haddon considers that the woolly-haired





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SHELL CARVINGS FROM RUBIANA, SOLOMON ISLANDS

(3)



Papuans were the earliest settlers in the Western Pacific. In time there came from Indonesia migrations of a lighter-skinned people with wavy or straight hair who mixed with them, producing the blend we term Melanesian. There were also subsequent movements from Polynesia into Melanesia.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. M. Haberlandt, the German ethnologist, refers to the Papuans of New Guinea and Melanesia and says "they mixed with the Polynesian and Micronesian population and extended westwards in consanguineous degrees into the Asiatic mainland". He finds them ranking "in the foremost line of navigators, possessing well-built boats, with rafts (outriggers) projecting from the sides which minimize the risk of capsizing. In the Fiji Islands there are twin boats, with connecting bridges and projecting rafts." He regards the Polynesians as an "eminently sea-faring people" who were "induced by various motives to wander continually from archipelago to archipelago".<sup>2</sup>

Dr. MacMillan Brown insists, after experience of personal investigation into the race problem, that "cross-breeding" has taken place to a great extent. Of New Hebrides, for instance, he says he has been "disabused" of the idea that "there is one Melanesian type in this archipelago". He gives interesting details:

"In every village the tall stature is to be seen alongside pigmy, the long and wavy hair alongside the tufty negroid, and the cross between the two, the Astrakhan fur, the brown and even blond hair (in the babies especially), beside the raven black, the various shades of brown skin beside the black, the concave, equilateral triangle nose beside the Grecian and the aquiline, the thick lips beside the thin, the short and medium head beside the long. In

<sup>1</sup> *The Races of Man*, Cambridge, 1924, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> M. Haberlandt, *Ethnology* (The Temple Primers), pp. 108 et seq.



some islands the negroid features predominate over the Caucasoid so emphatically that one is almost persuaded to accept this as the Melanesian type, but the presence of a sprinkling of the more European features and hair and complexion even here produces hesitation."

Dr. MacMillan Brown "found it the same in the Solomon Islands", but the sprinkling of light hair and "European features" was larger, especially in Malaita and the islands near it. He found the New Hebrides as a whole "distinctly more negroid" except in Omba, where Dr. Cook was struck by the light complexions of the natives and called their home "Lepers' Island".<sup>1</sup>

Tall types occur. Mr. Douglas Rannie, a Government agent from Queensland, refers to<sup>2</sup> a chief named Tariare as "one of the handsomest men I ever saw. He stood about seven feet high and was proportionately built. His features were fine and clear cut, with an aquiline nose. He wore his hair long in ringlets reaching to his waist." Dr. MacMillan Brown<sup>3</sup> tells that he has seen Melanesians in various parts "well above six feet high".

Other observers have approached the problem from different view-points. Dr. George Brown, the missionary-ethnologist, expresses the opinion that both the Melanesians and Polynesians were descended from a common stock, which reached Malaysia from the mainland of Asia and that the physical characters of the earliest settlers were modified by repeated migrations from India. Approaching the problem mainly from the linguistic viewpoint he writes:

"I believe that the original race was Negrito; that the language spoken by them was one of the Turanian family and not Caucasian;

<sup>1</sup> J. MacMillan Brown, *Peoples and Problems of the Pacific*, Vol. 1, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> *My Adventures Among South Sea Cannibals*, p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 44.

that the Caucasian element now seen in some of the languages, more especially in Eastern Polynesia, was due to an admixture of peoples speaking a language belonging to the Indo-European family; that the present Melanesian races are the earliest representatives of the admixture of the earlier immigrants with the original inhabitants, while the brown Polynesians who first inhabited Malaysia represent a later and greater admixture caused by successive immigration of Caucasian peoples; that these brown Polynesians were driven from what is now called Malaysia by irruptions of Malays, and proceeded eastward to Samoa, from which the dispersion took place."

Dr. George Brown admits that "we cannot prove identity of origin from similarity of language", and that the fact of Malayan or Eastern Polynesian words being found in a Melanesian or Papuan language does not afford proof of descent from a common stock. But he takes the view that "these words were in common use amongst the original peoples who inhabited the Malay Peninsula prior to the Malay irruption". They became common property.

"They were in the language of the Papuan races, in that of the mixed races which constitute the brown Polynesians, whom the Malays drove out, were adopted by the Malays, and so are found to-day in all branches of these families."<sup>1</sup>

Reverting to the problem at a later stage,<sup>2</sup> the same writer expresses the opinion that "the original home of the Melanesian and Polynesian people was in India, probably in the valley of the Ganges, which was then, as were other parts of India, occupied by a people quite distinct from the Aryan or Indo-Germanic race which subsequently entered India and subjugated or dislodged to a considerable extent the people they found there".

<sup>1</sup> G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 18 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 368 et seq.



He thinks the Polynesians left India at a much later date than did the Melanesians, "and so were more influenced by the immigrants from the mainland of India".

Dr. George Brown draws attention to the permanent character of the rules of the complex grammar of the Oceanic peoples, and says he has lived for years amongst the Polynesians and Melanesians, but has "never known a native make a mistake in grammar". This fact is all the more wonderful because "the respective peoples live in widely different stages of culture and intellectual development".

Although it would be a mistake to attempt solution of the race problem by means of the linguistic data alone, these cannot be ignored, for they undoubtedly have their value. As much is made apparent by the evidence which follows.

Mr. S. H. Ray<sup>1</sup> has divided the Oceanic language into four main branches from a common stem. These are:

1. Indonesian, comprising the language of Madagascar, Malacca, Sumatra, Java, the south-eastern Sunda Islands, Borneo, Celebes, the Philippines, and Formosa.
2. Micronesian, comprising the languages of Palau, Caroline, Marshall, and Gilbert Groups.
3. Melanesian, comprising the languages of the Bismarck Archipelago, portions of south-eastern and north-eastern New Guinea, the Solomon, Fiji, Banks, and New Hebrides Groups, the Loyalty Islands, and New Caledonia.
4. Polynesia, comprising the languages of the Eastern Pacific from Hawaii, Marquesas and Easter Islands to Samoa, Tonga, and New Zealand.

Mr. Ray has shown that (1) the vocabulary reveals evidence of common origin; (2) apparent differences in grammar are modifications of the same methods rather

<sup>1</sup> *The Common Origin of the Oceanic Languages.*



than actual differences of structure; (3) the principal constructive particles are the same; and (4) the languages are in various stages, of which the Polynesian is the latest.

The Rev. C. E. Fox, in his paper on "The Comparison of the Oceanic Languages",<sup>1</sup> says that "the positive evidence in favour of origin from a common stock is very strong". He thinks it is "impossible in a general way to speak of one group as having borrowed from a neighbouring group the words common to both". He does not, however, confuse language with race, and writes:

"There is no doubt that a Melanesian differs very much from a Polynesian or from a Malay in physical features. Whether the Polynesians of the Eastern Pacific are a race resulting from the mixture of a dark Melanesian people with traders from the mainland—a race who spoke the language of their Melanesian mothers rather than that of their foreign fathers—or whether the two races are distinct and one has imposed its language on the other (if this is credible), is really not a question for the student of languages. How it happens that people so different in physical features speak languages which are branches from a common stock he cannot tell."

He considers, however, the philological evidence proves that "the settlement of the Melanesian group must have taken place long before that of the Polynesian peoples", and he points out in this connexion that the "Melanesian languages" differ more among themselves than do "the Polynesian group". He continues:

"A student of Polynesian languages finds a marked agreement between the languages of two Polynesian islands, such as Tonga and New Zealand, once a regular change of letters, such as *h* and *s*, *f* and *wh*, *l* and *r*, has been made. In fact, a native of one can make himself understood by a native of the other.

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, Vol. XXXIX, pp. 464 et seq.

"This is not at all the case in Melanesia. A native of the Banks Islands would be quite unintelligible to a native of the New Hebrides, or southern or northern Solomons or Fiji. Students of Polynesian languages do not perhaps realize this. They suppose that the Melanesian languages agree among themselves as much as the Polynesian languages do; but the diversity of their vocabularies is really remarkable. In fact the vocabulary of the northern Solomons shows more agreement with that of the New Hebrides than with that of the Banks Group, which lies midway between the two.

"All this points to ancient settlement and long isolation. The settlement of the Eastern Pacific must have been much more recent, and the constant state of warfare in which the Melanesians lived, their isolation and lack of trade enterprise in most cases, all tended to add to that divergence in their languages which long settlement would naturally produce."

Mr. Fox traces foreign elements in both the Melanesian and Polynesian languages, and goes on to say:

"The Malays have borrowed from Asia, especially India. The Polynesians may also have borrowed words either before their migration or to some extent from the people they dispossessed. In Santa Cruz, Savo, Vella Lavella, and some bush dialects, Mr. Ray (and modern German philologists) believe there are traces of a pre-Melanesian tongue. In New Guinea, Papuan words have been borrowed, in some cases plentifully. This borrowing from foreign sources is a very different thing from an Oceanic language, such as Fijian, borrowing from another Oceanic language, such as Tongan."

The migrations of the Melanesians would appear to have been of more limited character than those of the very adventurous Polynesians. When we find physical traces of Melanesian settlements in Eastern Polynesia, it is a matter for the most careful and serious investigation to discover whether they reached that area as





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# POTTERY VESSELS FROM FIJI

Fijian pottery exhibits great variety of shape, and pots are covered with vegetable varnish.





allies or servants of Polynesians, or whether groups of them were independent explorers, or accidental discoverers of new lands towards which they were driven by storms and from which they could not return.

"Certain European ethnologists," writes S. Percy Smith, with reference to this phase of the problem, "seem to be reviving a theory to the effect that all, or most, of Polynesia was peopled by a Melanesian race prior to the advent of the Polynesian." He rejects this idea and says:

"The Melanesians were not a race of navigators like the Polynesians, and where we find traces of the former race in certain of the islands, as illustrated partly by the physical appearances, anthropometry, or an occasional custom, it seems to us that all these matters are traceable to contact with the Melanesians in their present abodes in the Western Pacific; and also very largely from the fact that the Polynesians made use of the Melanesians as slaves to man their canoes on their long voyages. Women of the darker race were often taken as wives or concubines by the Polynesians, and hence the traces discernible, in some parts, of Melanesian characteristics in the present people."<sup>1</sup>

To Europeans an especially interesting phase of the Oceanic race problem is the occurrence of the blond types, already mentioned, on various widely-separated islands not only in Polynesia, but in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Indonesia.

Writing of the blonds in Polynesia, Mr. S. Percy Smith says:

"We find a strain of light-coloured people who are not Albinos, but have quite light hair and fair complexions. With the Maoris this strain often runs in families for many generations; at other times it appears as a possible reversion to the original type from which the strain was derived."

<sup>1</sup> *Hawaii* (Fourth Edition), pp. 152-3.

The same writer thinks that the Patu-pai-arehe<sup>1</sup> of the Maori stories, who are always described as a "white" people, and have been referred to by some writers as "fairies", were really representatives of a fair race with whom the ancestors of the Maoris had been in contact. It was from the Patu-pai-arehe that the Maoris, according to a well-known native folk-tale, learned how to make nets. A man named Kahu-kura took part in a night fishing with the white people and obtained possession of a net they had abandoned. Then, using it as a pattern, he was able to instruct his people how to make nets. Apparently Kahu-kura lived in India or Indonesia and was the same man who brought the *kumara* (sweet potato) to the knowledge of the ancestors of the Polynesians before they reached the coral islands and New Zealand.<sup>2</sup>

S. Percy Smith also draws attention to a race of "gods", whom the Maori people knew as the "Pakehakeha". They were supposed to live on the sea. When in the eighteenth century the fair Europeans became known the Maoris referred to them as the "Pakeha". Other Maori names for the white Europeans are Turehu, Waraki, Maitai (the latter also meaning iron). No meaning can be given by Maori scholars to names like Patu-pai-arehe, Parehe, or Waraki, and S. Percy Smith believes they are "corruptions of words of some other and foreign language learned in ancient days from a foreign race". He suggests that *patu* is the Polynesian rendering of the Hindu word "pandu" (white). But in Sanskrit literature *śukla* is the term usually applied to the Brahman of the "white caste", while the term *pita* was applied to the "yellow caste". S. Percy Smith offers the alternative

<sup>1</sup> Also called Turehu or Parehe.

<sup>2</sup> S. Percy Smith, *Hawaii* (Fourth Edition), pp. 142 et seq., and *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 25.



suggestion that the fair people with whom the Polynesians were at one time in contact were either Phœnicians or Greeks who had reached the East Indies.<sup>1</sup>

There were native legends in Hawaii referring to a great explorer named Paumakua which tell of the arrival of white people. According to Fornander,<sup>2</sup> this famous voyager "brought back with him to Oahu two white men, said to have been priests, Auakahinu and Auakamea, afterwards named Kaekae and Maliu, and from whom several priestly families in after ages claimed their descent and authority". Another legend, which is less explicit, appears to refer to another white man named Kaula who became known as Malela. A white woman is referred to in still another legend. Fornander gives further details regarding the imported aliens:

"The white foreigners who came with Paumakua are in the legend said to have been *Ka haale nui, maka alohilohi, ke a aholehole, maka aa, ka puua keokeo nui, maka ulaula* (Foreigners of large stature, bright sparkling eyes, white cheeks, roguish staring eyes, large white hogs with reddish faces)."

The word *puua* (hog or pig) applied to individuals may not seem complimentary to Europeans, but Fornander assures us that in Hawaii it was "a poetical and sacerdotal expression". Some of the legends about the introduction of two white foreign priests credit Paumakua with the introduction of the ceremony of circumcision.

The Hawaiian god Lono was supposed to be fair, and Captain Cook was identified with him when he discovered the Sandwich or Hawaiian group of islands. Another fair god was the Tangaroa of Mangaia, regarding whose descendants a South Pacific creation song says:

<sup>1</sup> *Hawaiihi*, pp. 143-5.

<sup>2</sup> *The Polynesian Race*, London, 1880, Vol. II, pp. 24 et seq.

"Anau keu a Tangaroa  
Kua piri paa i te ao."

"The fair-haired children of Tangaroa  
Doubtless sprung from dazzling light."

Tarauri, the famous son of Tangaroa, and his brother were said to be both fair-haired, Gill informs us, and proceeds:

"Hence, when Cook discovered Mangaia, the men of that day were greatly surprised at the fair hair and skin of their visitors, and at once concluded that these were some of the long-lost fair children of Tangaroa."<sup>1</sup>

Samuel Patterson, a survivor of the wrecked ship *Eliza*, who spent some time among the Fijians in 1808, saw a white native whom he mistook for a sailor. His narrative runs:

"These people (the natives) are well shaped, and of comely features in many instances, their hair black and naturally straight, and their skin of a copper colour, excepting in a single instance we saw one who was white amongst them, as Steere and myself were walking out. He was in company with a large collection, and I, thinking he was a European, and being overjoyed, cried out, 'How fare you, shipmate?' But the savages broke out in great laughter, saying, *ta haw haw haw peppa langa Feejee, peppa langa Feejee*, that is, 'white man of Feeje'. Whether any others were white among them I never knew."<sup>2</sup>

When the natives asked Patterson where he came from he said, "from America"; but they said "no" and, pointing up to the sun, asserted "White men are

<sup>1</sup> Rev. W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, London, 1876, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Works issued by the Hakluyt Society. Second series, No. lii. p. 104. The editors, Sir E. Im Thurn and Mr. Leonard C. Wharton write in a note: "Albinism is rare in Fiji; but there are known to be certain families in which the occurrence of an albino in each generation is essential to the retention by that family of its individual rights."



chiefs from the sun", or as the Hakluyt editors translate the Fijian given by Patterson, "White man lord of the sun".

In the Journal of the Missionaries put ashore from the *Hibernia* on an islet in the Fiji group in 1809-10, recently discovered among the unprinted manuscripts of the London Missionary Society, it is related that when the missionaries showed the natives some portraits of men in books, they exclaimed, *Kalou eke!* ("Here are spirits!)." <sup>1</sup>

Dr. MacMillan Brown finds "indubitable evidence" in Melanesia of a tall, handsome, and more European race of warriors "landing amongst negroids and changing their appearance, their culture and their language". In some islands there are "lighter" complexions and among babies "blond hair". He remembers meeting in the north of the Solomons a European planter "with an Admiralty boy as attendant who had the lightest of complexions and hair that was naturally blond". On the north-east coast of Dutch New Guinea he saw in a canoe "two native paddlers who formed a striking contrast; one was clearly an albino with yellow hair and pink eyes that shrank from the sun; the other was a healthy youngster with the red showing in his cheek and his head yellow, inclining to red". He spoke to them through an interpreter and found that the latter "came from a village whose families were almost as light in complexion as the boy". He could not see any fair natives in the Malay Archipelago, but he refers to Dr. H. O. Forbes who, in the sixth part of his *A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago*, "describes a people whom he came across in the back blocks of Eastern Timor as manifestly descendants of a blond ancestry". Dr. Forbes



had visited a fair and was about to resume his journey when he saw "a red-haired youth, first one, then a few others, some with curly hair, with red eyelashes, blue eyes and the hair over the body also reddish". There was a colony of the fair people not far off, and when intermarrying took place "the offspring sometimes took after one parent and sometimes after the other". At the time Dr. Forbes had left the kingdom of Bibisusu and had descended to the bed of the Makataka.

Of the neighbouring islands to the east, Timor Laut, Dr. Forbes writes:

"All the natives were handsome-featured fellows, lithe, tall, erect, and with splendidly formed bodies. They dyed their hair of a rich golden colour by a preparation made of coco-nut ash and lime, varying, however, in shade with the time from a dirty grey through a red or russet colour, till the second day, when the approved tint appeared."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. MacMillan Brown draws attention to a similar fashion in Melanesia and Western Polynesia of "liming the hair in order to make it blond or red". He thinks this fashion has a racial significance and that it is "on all fours" with the powdered wigs of the eighteenth century when "everyone wished to have the blond hair of the conquering Norse warriors who laid the foundations of European monarchies". But the custom of treating the hair to make it blond was prevalent in Western Europe many long centuries before the Viking Age. Diodorus Siculus, quoting Poseidonius of Apamea, tells that the fair Celts (Galatæ) not only had naturally blond hair, but endeavoured to intensify its colour and make it lustrous by washing it frequently in a lotion of lime.<sup>2</sup> The "Norse warriors" never conquered England.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Dr. MacMillan Brown, *Peoples and Problems of the Pacific*, Vol. II, pp. 193-4.

<sup>2</sup> Diodorus Siculus V 28.

Canute was a Dane and the Normans were not all of Norse descent; at the conquest they were accompanied by Bretons and others. Then the Tudors were proud of their Welsh connexion. We can safely drop the powdered wig theory. But the evidence afforded by the Indonesian, Melanesian, and Polynesian custom of liming the hair remains. As in the case of the Celts it certainly suggests that it had a racial origin. The Celts mixed with darker people like the Greeks, Illyrians, and Iberians, producing the blends known as Gallo-Græcians, Celt-illyrians, Celtiberians, &c., and it may be that hair liming was resorted to because their racial blondness was impaired by intermarriage with brunets.

Dr. MacMillan Brown also deals with the evidence regarding the blondness of the so-called "fairies" of Maori legend and the fair Tangaroa (Tangaloa) group of deities, as well as with that regarding the fair gods of Hawaii, including Kane (Tane), who in a prayer translated by Dr. Emerson is addressed:

"Oh Kane, the blond one, here is an offering of prayer to you, a snuff-coloured fowl for you, a fowl of light yellow colour, a fowl of a red colour. . . . the image of you, O Kane, the god of life."

He tells that in Honolulu he met one of the native chiefs of police named Makaena, who had a light brown complexion "with the red blood showing through the skin of the cheek; the hair was dark, but when in bright sunshine showed a reddish-brown tinge". Dr. MacMillan Brown informs us that

"He told me his mother was blond, and all her ancestry, as far back as she could go, were blond. When he was a boy his own hair was red; but his father, who had the usual dark hair, used to cut it off to the root and dye the skin black."



Dr. MacMillan Brown quotes from Angas's *New Zealanders* the letterpress attached to a picture of fair children at the "boiling springs" near Taupo Lake, North Island:

"In the very heart of the interior, light or golden-coloured hair may occasionally be observed, though it is by no means a circumstance of common occurrence; the boy whose portrait is given in the centre figure of the annexed group is the son of one of the chiefs of Tukanu, a settlement close to the boiling springs near Taupo Lake, where no mixture with European races could have taken place; the natives regard the boy with considerable pride, and he is known by the appellation of Ko Tiki, which means an heirloom or treasure."

Dr. MacMillan Brown thinks that the Easter Island images represent a "Caucasoid" if not "European" people—the aristocrats of former times. He detects "Caucasoid traces" in the features and hair of the small remnant of natives now living in Hangaroa and goes on to say that

"All the early visitors to the Island, Behrens, who wrote the first description of Roggwein's discovery in 1722, Cook, Forster, Beechey, Moerenhout, give such description of the natives as might well fit Europeans. Brother Eyraud, the first to reside on the Island, staying on it nine months in 1864, says that 'their colour, though a little coppery, differed little from that of Europe, many being entirely white'."

Dr. MacMillan Brown, in his survey of the Micronesian evidence regarding blondness, says that in "the intricate mixture of races in the Mariannes and Carolines the Spaniards evidently recognized a lighter race, whom they called Blancos. These were the ruling classes, who, by their honouring seacraft and shipbuilding above all other arts, and forbidding the darker subject peoples having anything to do with navigation, reveal themselves







PLATFOM FOR DEAD BODIES, SOUTH CAPE, NEW GUINEA

(a)

as descendants of sea-kings. Like the Polynesians, they voyaged far in great canoes, and were the Vikings of the Pacific."

It would appear to be certain that there were representatives of the fair peoples among the seafarers who discovered and occupied groups of the South Sea Islands. Some may, like the Blancos, have been comparatively fair, but others were undoubtedly blonds. We know that there were blonds in Asia. The fair and blue-eyed Usuns or Wu-suns of Chinese Turkestan, for instance, raided Chinese territory about 200 B.C., and there were fair Scythians in Asia who were in contact with the Chinese and invaded India. It is possible that among the crews of the Phœnician and other seafarers who migrated towards the East there were representatives of fair peoples. The fair Celts were, as we know, employed as mercenaries by the Carthaginians, Greeks, and Macedonians, and settled in considerable numbers in Asia Minor. Fair Celts visited Alexander the Great at Babylon, and Ptolemy<sup>1</sup> refers to them as men "of large stature". We do not know how far these wandering Celts may have gone, but it is of interest to note that not only did they lime their hair like certain Indonesians, Melaneseans, and Polynesians, but were also head-hunters who, like the Maoris, embalmed the heads of enemies.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. MacMillan Brown, however, prefers to identify the fair seafarers of the Pacific with the Nordics from the Baltic area and takes them through Central Asia, Manchuria, Korea, and Japan. "Like the Ainu," he says, "they brought with them not only their European physique but an Indo-European vocabulary from the shores of the Baltic."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy, son of Lagus, quoted by Arian, *Anabasis*, I, 4, § 6, and VII, 15, § 4.

<sup>2</sup> Poseidonius of Apamea, quoted by Diodorus Siculus V, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Peoples and Problems of the Pacific*, Vol. II, Chapters XIX and XX.



Perhaps, after all, it would be better to leave the origin of the blond types in Oceania an open question. More than one theory can, in the present state of our ethnological knowledge, be urged with a good deal of plausibility. The only thing that appears to be certain is that the occurrence of blond types in the Pacific is of greater antiquity than the appearance among the South Sea Islands of European explorers and traders.

## CHAPTER III

### Race and Culture Mixing

Melanesian Conception of World—Whalers and Missionaries as White Ghosts—Black Face-paint favoured in Melanesia—An Island without Canoes—Jade found and worked on Tanna and New Caledonia—Race Mixing—Polynesian Types among Polynesians—Drift Voyages—Body Painting not necessarily of Racial Significance—Black as Mourning Colour—Canoes of New Caledonia Group—Migrations not all Intentional—Coast People and Bush People—Traditions of "Wild Men"—Islanders who abandoned Seafaring—Hair-liming as Magical Custom—The Boat-building Caste—Frigate Bird and Bonito Fishing—Frigate Bird Symbolism of the Solomons—Melanesians in Polynesia—Race Mixing in Fiji—Migration Traditions—Fijian Aristocrats—Melanesian Strain in New Zealand and Chatham Islands—Drift Voyages to New Zealand—Easter Island Connexion with the Solomons—Easter Island Statues and Solomons Prototypes—Frigate Bird supplanted by "Sooty Tern"—Race and Culture Mixing on Easter Island—Philippine Connexion with Melanesia—Easter Island Cranial Evidence of Melanesian Fusion with Polynesians.

In a small town in the north of Scotland an elderly worthy, who had never travelled much or read much, once delivered a lecture to a local society. His subject was his native place, and he expressed his firm conviction that it was situated in "the centre of the world", because when he lay on his back on a patch of green grass behind his house and looked upward he could fix his eyes, as he explained, on a centre directly above him from which the sky curved downward all around him "like an umbrella".

The Melanesians of Banks Islands had similarly a very limited conception of the world. Dr. Codrington<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Melanesians*, Oxford, 1891, p. 11 *et seq.*

tells us that they believed it consisted of " their own group, with the Torres Island, the three or four northern New Hebrides, and perhaps Tikopia, round which the ocean spread till it was shut in by the foundations of the sky ". When the whalers began to visit their coasts, the natives could not believe they came from any land but " must have been made out at sea ". Nor could they believe they were ordinary human beings because they were not dark skinned. Some thought they were ghosts. Codrington tells that when Mr. Patteson and his mission party first landed at Mota,

" There was a division of opinion among the natives; some said that the brothers of Qat had returned, certain supernatural beings of whom stories are told; others maintained that they were ghosts. Mr. Patteson retired from the heat and crowd into an empty house, the owner of which had lately died; this settled the question, he was the ghost of the late householder, and knew his home."

Ghosts were not welcomed. It was feared they would bring disease and disaster. In Santa Cruz the Patteson party was shot at, but the natives did not believe the arrows would do them much harm. They were intended simply to scare them away. Evidently these natives were not accustomed to see the blond types referred to by Dr. MacMillan Brown and others.

The Melaneseans, in Cook's time, certainly favoured black as a face paint. When the famous explorer visited Eromanga in the New Hebrides he recorded:

" Their complexions are naturally dark, yet they paint their faces, some with black, and others with red pigment."

He added that he saw " no canoes in any part of the island ".

On reaching the neighbouring island of Tanna, Cook





Photo. Steadman.

#### FISHING IMPLEMENTS

1. Float used in Solomon Islands. 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10. Fish Traps 5 and 10 are made of bamboo lashed together with coir string. 3. Net for scooping up the Italolo (an Oceanic worm). 4. Fishing spears. 6. Float made from Globe Fish.



found that the men and women were "dark" but not "black".

"They make themselves blacker than they really are by painting their faces the colour of blacklead. They use a sort of pigment which is red, and a third sort which is brown; all these, especially the first, they lay on with a liberal hand, not only on the face, but on the neck, shoulders and breast."

Cook observed that bracelets, armlets, and ear-rings were worn by both sexes.

"The armlets are made of the green stone of Zealand, and the bracelets of sea-shells or coco-nuts; and the necklaces, chiefly worn by the women, mostly of sea-shells. The valuable ear-rings are made of tortoise shell."

The Rev. A. W. Murray of the London Missionary Society, commenting on this passage, thinks that Cook's reference to Zealand (New Zealand) was an error. "The stone referred to," he says, "must be obtained on the island itself, or on some of the neighbouring islands. It was very highly prized by the Tannese and others in former years, and in many places it is so still. It is the Green Jade."<sup>1</sup>

The Tannese did not necessarily require to voyage to New Zealand to obtain jade, nor even to New Caledonia, the source of the jade used by the Loyalty Islanders. Julian Thomas<sup>2</sup> found on Tanna itself specimens of a rock resembling New Zealand greenstone, and states that "the natives made charms of it as in Maoriland".

On the island of Anaiteum, to the south of Tanna, there was no tattooing. The people painted themselves, and like the Tannese men wore their hair long while the women had theirs "cropped short".

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Islands*, London, 1874, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Cannibals and Convicts*, p. 284.



The Rev. A. W. Murray found evidence of racial intermixture on Anaiteum, and wrote:

"Some have woolly hair and a negro expression of countenance, while others have straight hair and exhibit Eastern Polynesian features and colour. And this agrees with a tradition that at a very remote period a canoe came to their island from Savaiki (Savaii, the largest island of the Samoan group), and that the people that were in it became amalgamated with the natives; and it agrees, moreover, with the fact that several purely Samoan words *Anai-teumized* are found in the language."<sup>1</sup>

Of special interest is the evidence regarding racial fusions, body painting, and seafaring to be obtained from New Caledonia.

This island of excellent harbours is the largest between New Guinea and New Zealand. It is about two hundred miles long, and about twenty-five miles in breadth. A central high rocky ridge extends along its entire length, and it is almost entirely surrounded by a barrier reef.

Captain Cook discovered New Caledonia on 14th Sept., 1774, when on his way from the New Hebrides to New Zealand. He found the natives shy at first, but when he won their confidence they proved to be "very courteous", and he wrote of them:

"They are strong, robust, active, well-made people, courteous and friendly, and not the least addicted to pilfering, which is more than can be said of any other nation in this sea. They are nearly of the same colour as the natives of Tanna, but have better features, more agreeable countenances, and are a much stouter race—a few being seen who measured six feet, four inches. I observed some who had thick lips, flat noses, full cheeks, and in some degree the features and look of a negro."

The Rev. A. W. Murray includes in the New Caledonia

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, p. 23.

group the Isle of Pines and the Loyalty Islands. He detected at least two different races in the blend, and writes:

"The natives with whom we have had intercourse—comprising those of Lifu, Maré, the Isle of Pines and the east end of the large island (New Caledonia)—are a fine race of people. They are . . . a different race from their neighbours on the New Hebrides; nor have they any affinity, so far as my knowledge extends, to any of the tribes to the east. . . . They are rather above the average height, strong and well proportioned, and their countenances are generally good and agreeable. They seem to have no affinity whatever to the Malay race, and about as little to other tribes of Western Polynesia (Melanesia).

"On the island of Uea two distinct races are found, the one allied to the Eastern Polynesian tribes, the other to those of the west."

The New Caledonian peoples are darker than the Eastern Polynesians.

"They do not tattoo, nor do they generally paint their bodies, but many daub themselves over with white sand; and, by some artificial process, they change the natural colour of their hair, which is black, to different shades of brown, and in some cases to white. It very much resembles coarse wool. And when, as is sometimes the case, they paint their faces jet black, and have their bodies stuck over with white sand and their hair white, they look very singular."<sup>1</sup>

It should not be assumed that the body painting custom had always, if ever, a racial significance. The Australians did not paint themselves red, yellow, or white because they had red, yellow, or white ancestors. Nor did the Melanesians on all occasions. When the missionary ship *John Williams* visited Anaiteum in 1849, Mr. Geddie, Mr. Murray, and others, on going ashore,

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, pp. 235 et seq.



saw a man "with his body all bedaubed with some black substance". This was "the native mode of expressing grief", and the missionaries were informed that "the man was mourning the recent death of some relative".<sup>1</sup>

The canoes of the New Caledonian group were somewhat superior to those in other Melanesian areas. Some were over forty feet long and double. The planks attaching the pair of canoes formed a deck on which a house was erected, and in the house was a hearth on which a fire was lit for cooking and other purposes. Sails were large and made of matting, and "with a good breeze and a moderate sea", a missionary records, "their vessels sail well". These vessels resembled those of the Tongans, and the missionaries of last century found Tongans "in every part of Western Polynesia (Melanesia)". Apparently these migrations and settlements were not always deliberate. Mr. Murray writes in this connexion:

"Their large and comparatively commodious vessels are a temptation to them to attempt much longer voyages than their neighbours, who have only single canoes; and the consequence is that a much greater number of them get lost at sea, or carried away to strange lands, than the less adventurous tribes of other groups."<sup>2</sup>

In the Solomon Islands, which lie between the New Hebrides and the Bismarck Archipelago, ethnologists have detected a variety of cultural areas. Dr. W. H. R. Rivers shows that in the largest islands of this group there are "two distinct populations, the people inhabiting the coast and those of the interior, who may be spoken of as the coast and bush people respectively". The bush people and coast people are "hostile to one another".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 40 and p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> *The History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. I, p. 232.



The "bush people" in various Melanesian areas were formerly regarded as "wild men" or were spoken of as only semi-human. They had no canoes and were unable to swim. Dr. Codrington tells that on Florida Island, for instance, the "wild men" were said to live in mountain caves and to feed on snakes and lizards. According to the coast folk-lore,

"They eat any coast man they can catch; they carry on their backs bags filled with pieces of obsidian, with which to pelt men whom they see, and they set nets round trees to catch men who have climbed them; they use spears also."

On Sa'a the "wild men" were said to be "small in stature, but very strong and swift". They wore their hair long and have long nails, "with which they tear the coast men to devour them". Perhaps the pygmies of New Guinea type are here referred to.

Similar accounts have been collected in the New Hebrides. It has been suggested that some of the stories of the "wild men" owe something to memories of large apes "in former seats of the Melanesian people". Dr. Codrington, however, prefers the view that we are really dealing with fanciful exaggerations. "The coast people," he says, "are much disposed to exaggerate" the difference "between themselves and the men of the *uta*, the inland tracts".<sup>1</sup>

It may well be that the bush people of various islands represent early settlements, and that they were driven inland by intruders who were better armed and more warlike. It need not surprise us to find inland peoples who have ceased to swim and to build and use canoes. The Maoris were formerly great seafarers, but after settling on New Zealand many ceased to favour sea-

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians*, p. 355.

faring, the country being large and food plentiful. Indeed, as time went on, the descendants of daring ancient mariners built smaller and smaller vessels and forgot what was formerly known about navigation. The sons and grandsons of mariners reared in inland districts knew little about boats and seafaring. We are ourselves a "seafaring people", and the descendants of enterprising seafarers. But a large section of the population has ceased to take more than an "academic interest" in the sea. City life and an inland life has rendered many unresponsive to the ancient glamour of the ocean and the isles.

In his intensive studies of localities in the South-east Solomons, Dr. W. G. Ivens has dealt with customs and beliefs which shed light in dark places. He informs us, for instance, that young men and girls "lime their hair, making it an orange red in colour". But the custom appears to have a magical rather than a racial significance. He writes in this connexion:

"Lime is used also to smear the body at dances and when fighting. It figures in the magical sleep of Ulawa when the soul goes out on search. It is used as a protection against the attacks of malignant ghosts and is laid in the track of a victim to cause sickness and death. Lime mixed with salt water is added in the process of dyeing cane for bracelets, &c., and fan palm for canoe streamers."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ivens' research work is, in the volume from which I am quoting, concerned with the village of Sa'a on the island of Mala and the island of Ulawa, which lies 21 miles east of Sa'a.

Dealing with the canoes of this area, he says that they are all "plank built". It takes three trees to construct one of these vessels. The logs are split from end to end

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands*, London, 1927. p. 83.



and dressed with adzes. Only two planks are obtained by this wasteful method from each log.

There are men in certain families who are skilled in canoe construction. "Their services are much sought after," says Dr. Ivens. "It is not every man who can use an adze or who can set out a canoe. The builder has to be paid and fed."

One type of canoe is for fishing the bonito, which belongs to the mackerel family and is constantly pursuing flying fish, the shoals being followed by frigate birds. It is a swift vessel, accommodating three or four men, and its decorative "luck motifs" include frigate birds, fish jaws, zigzags for clouds, and the snake's tooth, while there is a carved crouching dog at the stern.

There are two types of overseas canoes, the large ones having five or six seats. In these, Dr. Ivens found, voyages are made to sell cargoes of taro and pigs, or simply to exhibit a newly-decorated vessel. An old type of canoe, which was still in use towards the end of the eighteenth century, had "two projections on the prow", Dr. Ivens tells, "and was called *sara'a*, branching. In the bows it had a short mast which was decorated with cowries." At the pointed stern were "carvings of two birds and a man".<sup>1</sup>

On San Cristoval, at the south-eastern end of the Solomons, Dr. Fox has found that lime is used "in almost all magic"; it is smeared under the armpit and behind the ear for protection, long lines of lime are marked on dead bodies, dances impersonating the dead have crescent moons of lime on the breast, and lime is used in connexion with embalming and in the production of dyes and pigments. The bonito has a sacred character, and boys are secluded for two years in canoe houses, the walls of

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Ivens *op. cit.*, pp. 149 et seq.



which are of stone, until brought into ceremonial union with the bonito. The frigate bird is sacred to certain clans. It figures on canoes, is cut on the bodies of men, and tortoise-shell representations of the bird are fixed on the sun-disk symbols worn on foreheads.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ivens refers to conventional frigate birds carved on circlets of clam shell worn round the neck in former times on Little Mala.<sup>2</sup>

There are physical and cultural traces of Polynesian settlements in Melanesia and of Melanesian in Polynesia. Craighill Handy detects, in his study of Polynesian religious customs and beliefs, certain Melanesian traits which, he suggests, "probably spread through central and south Polynesia by the group of invaders who were repelled by the Samoans some centuries ago, the invaders called by the Samoans, the *Tonga-fiti*". He regards these as "Indo-Polynesians who had adopted many Melanesian practices".<sup>3</sup>

In Fiji the Polynesians and Melanesians have met and mingled, and in addition to the racial blends we detect cultural complexes of a highly interesting and difficult character. The two great islands of the group, Vanúa Levu and Viti Lévu, present sharp cultural contrasts, for in the former Melanesian influence appears to have predominated, descent being traced through the mother and women having certain rights, while in the latter, in the main, descent is traced through the father and women have no rights worth speaking of. Then on Vanúa Lévu there are no ancient migration traditions. This is a distinctively Melanesian trait. The only traditions that have survived relate to comparatively recent race-movements in limited areas. On the other hand

<sup>1</sup> C. E. Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific*, London, 1924, pp. 185, 245-6, 267, 273.

<sup>2</sup> W. G. Ivens, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

<sup>3</sup> *Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin* 34, p. 328.

migration traditions are abundant in Polynesia, and on Viti Lévu, where the Polynesian racial element predominates, especially on the coasts, there are definite traditions of a migration from the north-west.

The Rev. W. Deane, writing of the Fijian chiefly class, notes how they have been in the habit of treating the common folk with contempt. He tells that he once asked a high chief the meaning of the term *Kaist* (common herd), and the old man pointed with scorn at the commoners beside him. "They in their subservience," says Mr. Deane, "did their utmost to bear the insulting action with composure, but it was evident that they felt the public humiliation keenly." Touching on the problem of the bush people already referred to, Mr. Deane writes:

"It is remarkable that the people on the coast, as a class . . . despise the people of the interior, especially those of darker skin, holding themselves to be of more chiefly origin. It is common for a man with a dark skin to be called by the humiliating name of *Kai Dhólo* (inhabitant of the interior). Students of this question generally agree that the darker people of the interior have in them the blood of a lower type of humanity, viz., the Melanesians; while the lighter class have in their veins the blood of the superior Polynesians. And when a more intelligent class of people are thus placed by circumstances over their inferiors, we have just the soil in which the pride of the Fijian chieftain could thrive and flourish."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. J. H. Scott has traced a Melanesian strain in New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> "We know," he says, "the Maoris to be a mixed race, the result of the mingling of a Polynesian and a Melanesian strain. The crania already examined leave no room for doubt on this point." Having himself examined and described about 200 skulls from

<sup>1</sup> Rev. W. Deane, *Fijian Society*, London, 1931, pp. 1-9; R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, London, 1891, p. 47; W. H. R. Rivers, *Melanesian Society*, Cambridge, 1914, Vol. II, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 1 et seq.



New Zealand and the Chatham Islands, he shows that the cranial indices demonstrate two distinct types and intermediate forms:

"At the one extreme we have skulls approaching the Melanesian form, as met with in the Fiji group, long and narrow, high in proportion to their breadth, prognathous, and with wide nasal openings. At the other are skulls of the Polynesian type, such as are common in Tonga and Samoa, shorter and broader, with orthognathous faces. And it must be noted that these extreme forms do not belong to different tribes or districts, but may be found in one."

The Melanesian characteristics are "more accentuated in the North amongst the natives of the South Island". In the Bay of Islands area "the Papuan form of skull" is prevalent. Moriori skulls from the Chatham Islands closely resemble the Maori.

Mr. Elsdon Best<sup>1</sup> refers to the accounts preserved in Maori folk-lore of the original natives of New Zealand. They are spoken of as "a dark-skinned people of inferior culture", with "bushy heads of hair, flat faces, side-glancing eyes, flat noses and spreading nostrils". In build they were "spare", and Maori traditions refer to them as "an indolent, shiftless, chilly folk who complained of the coldness of the climate". They were found "in occupation of the more northern parts of the North Island only. . . . None had settled in the South Island." According to a tradition among these people, "they were the descendants of the occupants of three drift canoes that had been carried from their homeland by a westerly gale". Mr. Elsdon Best draws attention to another item of interesting evidence regarding racial intermixture in New Zealand:

"Missionary Yates and other early writers have told us that

<sup>1</sup> *The Maori*, Vol. 1, pp. 5 et seq.

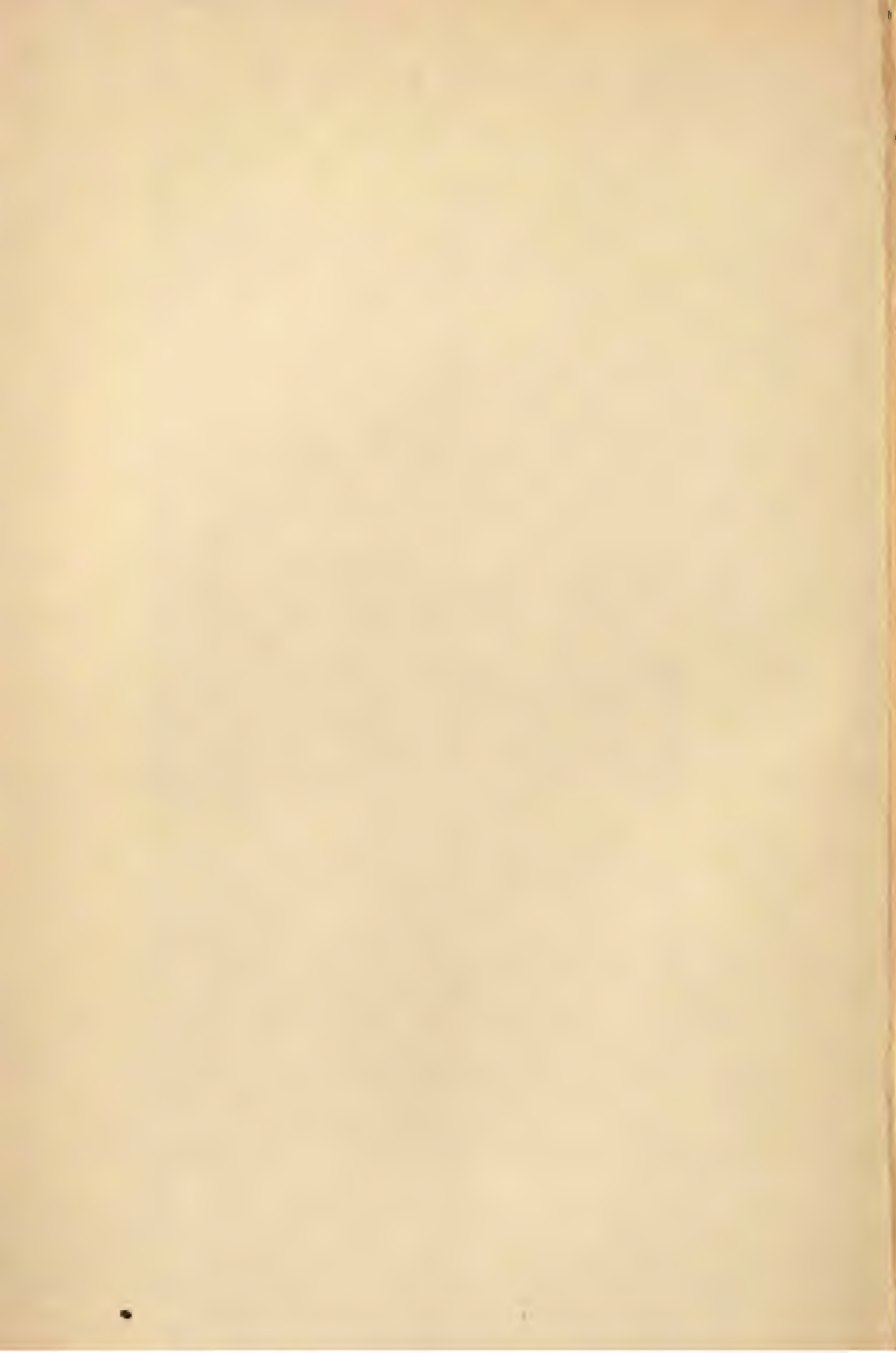




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By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

A STONE IMAGE FROM EASTER ISLAND



the Maori mothers were in the habit of flattening the noses of their infants by means of pressure. This peculiar custom would not have originated among the purer, straight-nosed Polynesians; one can but think it dates back to the flat-nosed aboriginal women who were taken to wife by the early Polynesian settlers on these shores."

The same writer says further:

"Among our Maori folk exist certain arts, customs, institutions, and artifacts that are unknown in Polynesia, but which are known in Melanesia. Thus the well-known curvilinear decorative art of the Maori finds no counterpart in Polynesia, but something much resembling it exists in New Guinea."

The fortified villages of New Zealand are non-Polynesian, with the exception of "something of the kind" at Tonga, the result, Mr. Best thinks, of "intercourse with Fiji, where, on Viti-levu, such fortified villages were numerous".

Mr. Henry Balfour, writing in *Folk Lore*,<sup>1</sup> shows that there are very remarkable links between Easter Island and the Solomons. Dealing with the monolithic statues, he emphasizes that "in facial form they differ from any normal type either Polynesian or Melanesian, nor do they bear resemblance to Polynesian representation of the human form whether realistic or conventional". Their outstanding features are, as he indicates, "(1) the prominent, overhanging brow; (2) the absence of any indication of eyes . . .; (3) the very long, concave nose (differing markedly from the arched noses of the wooden figures); (4) the protruding or 'pouting' lips; (5) the prominent, pointed chin; (6) the greatly distended ear-lobes; and lastly (7) the cylindrical so-called 'hats' or 'crowns' of red volcanic tufa, which originally surmounted the heads of many of the statues".

<sup>1</sup> Vol. XXVIII, 1917, pp. 356 et seq.



Mr. Balfour finds the prototype of these strange figures in the "so-called 'canoe-prow gods' and other representations of human form from New Georgia, San Cristoval and other parts of the Solomon Islands". He explains "the very excessive prognathism" of the Solomons figures by suggesting the "hybridization of two designs"—that of the human form and the sacred frigate bird. The bird was sometimes depicted with human arms, and there are more composite forms such as bird-headed men and man-headed birds. Examples are to be seen in the British Museum and in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. Although in most of the Solomon Islands figures the eyes are indicated, usually by pieces of pearl-shell, "occasionally they are omitted and are merely suggested by the shadows cast by the overhanging brow", as is the case with the eyeless Easter Island statues. The resemblance between the art-products of the two widely-separated areas is certainly very striking.

Mr. Balfour urges tentatively a most suggestive theory to account for the red "hats" or "crowns" of the Easter Island figures. "Why," he asks, "should a *red* material be specially used, when the normal native hair-colour would be black or very dark?" He reminds us in this connexion of the Oceanic habit of hair-bleaching by means of lime, and that in most of the carved figures from the Solomon Islands hair of a light colour is indicated. He suggests that the Easter Island "hats" or "crowns" may have been intended to represent curly or frizzly hair-masses such as are so common in Melanesia but unknown in Polynesia. The cylindrical shape may have simply been "imposed by necessity": they had, for instance, to be transported many miles and "could only be moved by rolling".

Mr. Balfour then considers the rock sculpturings,



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CANOE PROW HEADS, SOLOMON ISLANDS





painting and engravings of the "Bird-cult" of Easter Island. The figures are mainly those of the tern—the "Sooty tern", called by our sailors the "Wide-awake" or "Egg-bird". Once a year the natives observed a ceremony, an outstanding feature of which was the race to secure the first egg of a tern, the winner becoming the "Bird-man" of the year. "The sacred egg was preserved in his house until the next season."

Mr. Balfour shows that while in the Easter Island rock sculptures the tern is the bird often depicted, as is indicated by the straight pointed beak and forked tail, "many of the other representations equally clearly represent the frigate bird, with hooked beak and forked tail, or in several instances portray an anthropomorphized bird having frigate-bird attributes". In some cases a tern design is combined with a suggestion of the gular pouch of the frigate bird, or a figure may show the body of a tern with a frigate bird's head. Mr. Balfour's comments in this connexion seem very convincing, as when he writes:

"This seems to point to a recollection retained by the immigrants into Easter Island of a former cult of the frigate-bird which was practised in a region where this bird was a familiar feature, and which was gradually given up in the new environment where this bird, though probably not unknown, was certainly not abundant. The frigate-bird does not appear to breed on Easter Island; indeed, the island offers little attraction as a nesting site to a bird which usually nests in trees. It appears probable that the older (Melanesian) cult was superseded by a new cult, of which the locally abundant sooty tern became the object. The evidence derived from comparative technology suggests very forcibly that the Melanesian area, and more particularly the Solomon Islands group, was the original home of the prototype of the frigate-bird cult which became decadent and finally obsolete after immigration into Easter Island."

Mr. Balfour shows that the frigate bird also figures prominently in the script of Easter Island. "It seems probable," he writes, "that the script itself originated in the Melanesian area and was perfected in Easter Island while the memory of this bird and of its cult associations still persisted. The newer bird-cult connected with the tern seems to have had but little influence upon the script."

It would appear that in Easter Island there are undoubted traces of culture mixing. Mr. Balfour expresses in this connexion the view

"That a Melanesian migration at one time, or intermittently, ranged eastwards over the Pacific, and that these people reached Rapanui, amongst other islands, and took root there. That typical elements of Melanesian culture were thus introduced into the island, including the practice of distending the ear-lobe, characteristic style in art, certain types of implements, and the well-established cult of the frigate-bird, which was probably connected with rites aiming at increasing the fish-supply. That at a later time, a wave of Polynesian immigrants arrived and eventually conquered, partly exterminated and partly absorbed the 'long-eared' Melanesians, though they retained, and continued to perpetuate in their art, many of the features of Melanesian culture."

Mr. Balfour has the conclusion forced upon him by the available evidence that the non-Polynesian elements in Easter Island culture were imported from the Solomons. He also draws attention to certain affinities, "suggested by the implements and art, &c., of the Chatham Islands, of New Zealand and of British New Guinea" which call for further research in connexion with the problem of Melanesian influence in Polynesia.

Mr. Arnold Burley has drawn attention to an interesting "bird-cult" link between Easter Island and New Zealand which is dealt with in Mr. J. Cowan's *Maoris*





SOOTY TERN



FRIGATE BIRDS





of New Zealand. When the Maoris first reached New Zealand they carried with them "a stone bird which they regarded with extraordinary veneration". It was lost some years ago, and this caused "a great state of agitation". Eventually it was recovered, and Mr. Burley understands it is now "in safe custody in one of the strong rooms of a New Zealand bank".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. A. C. Haddon, commenting favourably on Mr. Balfour's theory of the diffusion of Melanesian culture throughout Polynesia, has provided important additional evidence in support of it.<sup>2</sup> He shows that the double-outrigger type of canoe known on Easter Island was formerly in use in the Marquesas and the Samoan Islands. Similar canoes are found in northern New Guinea and the Torres Straits area, in the Nissan group (Sir Charles Hardy Islands), and between Bougainville and New Ireland. He quotes a letter from an investigator who, referring to the Nissan double-outrigger canoe (the *kōp*), says: "I have now no doubt that the *kōp* has been brought by a Philippine or sub-Philippine wandering stream to New Ireland and neighbourhood, and that the double outrigger has in course of time been displaced by the Melanesian single outrigger and has stood its ground only in the island of Nissan."

Dr. Haddon also quotes evidence regarding skull forms which confirms the view that in parts of Polynesia there were settlements of non-Polynesian peoples. W. Volz, who examined a collection of about three dozen skulls from Easter Island, found that they were of various types. Dr. Haddon writes in this connexion:

"15 are stated to be, without doubt, Western Melanesians; 7 are Eastern Melanesians; 10 belong to Polynesian races; and four represent survivals of a very old population of Australian

<sup>1</sup> *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXIX, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161-2.

origin, but more nearly approach other survivals of Australians, especially in New Zealand (with traces elsewhere in Polynesia and in Melanesia), than the actual Australian type."

Volz is of opinion that the semi-Australian type "formed the oldest population of the island (Easter Island)", but states, Dr. Haddon says, that "it is uncertain whether they are aboriginal or brought by Melanesians". He thinks the pure Melanesian intrusion came next and that it was followed by the Polynesian migration.

Sir Arthur Keith and others have also detected the Melanesian element among the osteological remains of Easter Island.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Folk-Lore*, XXVIII, pp. 379-80.



## CHAPTER IV

### The Liquor of Longevity

"Betel Culture" and "Kava Culture"—Betel Mixture—The Kava Beverage—Medicinal Value of Kava—Habitual Kava Drinkers—Kava Names in Melanesia and Polynesia—Methods of Preparing the Beverage—Fundamental Religious Significance of Melanesian Kava Drinking—Not necessarily of Polynesian Origin—Kava in Samoan Hymns—Kava came from Sky-world—The Nectar of the Gods—Kava of the Underworld—Gods drink Kava in Hawaii—Wells sunk by Kava Drinkers—Priests and Chiefs as Kava Drinkers—Kava Libations to Gods—Kava drunk to induce Inspiration—Tangaloa Cult and Kava Drinking—Buddhism in Polynesia—Kava and the Indian Soma—Soma as Nectar of Hindu Gods—Soma from Sky-world—Theft of Soma by God Indra—Theft of Mead by Scandinavian God Odin—Origin of Wells in Teutonic Area—Celtic and English Liquors of Longevity—Greek Water of Lethe—Nectar of Olympians—Babylonian Gods as Tipplers—Egyptian Goddess as Beer Drinker—American Leaf-chewing and Drinking Customs—Links with Oceania—Religious Significance of Kava Drinking and the Chewing of the Betel Mixture.

Dr. Codrington, dealing with the racial and cultural drifts into Melanesia, refers to two main currents of influence on which floated respectively the kava root and the "betel nut". He notes that the use of the betel is "common to India, China and the Melanesian islands as far east as Tikopia", and that "the Polynesian kava has established itself in the New Hebrides and is a novelty in some of the Banks' Islands; it has not been carried across the boundary of the betel-nut by the Polynesian settlers in the Reef Islands of Santa Cruz".<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. H. R. Rivers writes of the "Kava people" and the "Betel people", and shows that "the distribution of kava and betel . . . suggests the presence in Oceania

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, pp. 1-2.

of two cultures which may be called the kava-culture and the betel-culture respectively". He is at pains to remind us, however, that he applies the terms "Kava people" and "Betel people" with reference to "hypothetical bodies of immigrants who introduced the use of these two substances".

"Betel chewing" is common in the East. It reddens the saliva and lips and blackens the teeth, and white men who have made experimental trial of the native mixture tell that the immediate effect is to make the amateur feel dizzy. Three substances are used—the betel leaf, the areca nut, and lime obtained by burning "branching coral". Betel is a climbing plant and a species of pepper (*Chavica Betel*), and the areca nut (also called "betel nut") is the kernel of the fruit of the palm *Arēca Cathēchu*. The ripe fruit is about the size of a cherry and of a brown colour; the nut is mottled like a nutmeg, is hot and acrid, and has aromatic and astringent properties. Chewers enclose the nut in a betel leaf, along with a little lime, and derive pleasure and satisfaction from the mixture. Like tobacco chewing, betel chewing becomes a habit that engenders a constant craving.

Kava is also a plant of the pepper family (*Piperacæ*) and is known to botanists as *Macropiper methysticum*. Its root is pounded or chewed, mixed with water, and allowed to ferment to make an intoxicating beverage. According to Dr. Seeman, who had knowledge of the kava-drinking custom in Fiji,

"The beverage has the look of coffee with plenty of milk in it, and an aromatic, slightly pungent taste, which, when once acquired, must, like all acquired tastes, be perfectly irresistible. It tastes like soap-suds, jalap and magnesia."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Dr. Inglis in *Bible Illustrations from the New Hebrides*, London and Edinburgh, 1890, p. 155.



"To a stranger," says Dr. John Fraser, "the taste of the fermented liquor is odious, resembling the flavour of soap-suds, mixed with magnesia and rhubarb."<sup>1</sup> Apparently some white men have accustomed themselves to the beverage. The Rev. Dr. John Inglis writes in this connexion:

"Some twenty years ago or so it was reported, although I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the report, that one of the first British governors of Fiji was in the habit, occasionally at least, of leaving Government house of an evening and stepping across to the kava-drinking hall of the chiefs, and, in order to ingratiate himself with the native aristocracy, joined them in quaffing off a cup of the soothing, saponaceous mixture, prepared for the company by the chief butler of Fiji."

Dr. Seeman has drawn attention to the medicinal value of the kava plant, and in the French translation of Golding Bird's work on calculous affections Dr. O'Rorke writes as follows:

"The kava plant is the most powerful sudorific in existence, and its stimulant qualities render it applicable in those cases where colchicum is prescribed. The intoxication it produces is not like that caused by spirituous liquors, but it rather induces a placid tranquillity, accompanied by incoherent dreams. Kava is as powerful in its therapeutic action as *lignum vitæ*, or *guaiacum*, *sarsaparilla*, &c., and the islanders use it as a specific against the diseases brought over to them by foreign vessels. On the other hand, this drug, used to excess as an intoxicating agent, over-excites the skin by its sudorific effects, and eventually even causes elephantiasis."<sup>2</sup>

To use kava "habitually to excess", Dr. Fraser says, "causes a white scurf to gather on the skin, and I am told that it is sad to see the emaciated form and scabby skin of habitual and heavy kava drinkers."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, Vol. XXV, 1891, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Dr. Inglis, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.



Dealing with local diseases and their cures, Dr. Inglis says that "side by side with the bane rises up the antidote". Ague and other fevers prevail in the New Hebrides, and dysentery and diarrhoea in Fiji. Dr. Inglis says that the natives found that kava was of value in such maladies, but unfortunately have used this "powerful medicine" as "a daily luxury", with the result that the blessing has been "perverted more or less into a curse".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. W. H. R. Rivers says that kava is found in the southern and eastern islands of Melanesia as well as in Polynesia. "The view generally accepted," he adds, "is that kava has been introduced into Melanesia from Polynesia." He thinks it probable that either in some parts of Melanesia the use of kava has been so introduced from Polynesia, or that "recent Polynesian influence has greatly modified an earlier method of using the substance".

The various names of kava in different areas is suggestive of its introduction from different sources at different periods. In Polynesia it is called *kava*, *yava*, *'ava*, and *kawa*; in Eromanga (New Hebrides) it is *ne have*, but in several other southern islands of the group the pure Polynesian name is used. On the islands of the northern Hebrides are such non-Polynesian names as *malohu*, *maluk*, *milik*, and *meruk*. The Fijian name *yanggona* has no relation to either the Polynesian or northern New Hebridean. To the north of the New Hebrides we find in the Banks Islands the name *gea*, which is a variety of the Torres Islands *gi*. Where the name differs, so does the mode of preparing kava. "The exception," says Dr. Rivers, "is Fiji, where kava is used in a way closely resembling that of Polynesia, although the Fijian term has no affinity whatever to the Polynesian

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Inglis, *op. cit.*, p. 159.



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By courtesy of the United States National Museum. Photo A. J. Olmsted.

WOODEN CLUB WITH HIEROGLYPHICS FOUND ON  
EASTER ISLAND





name." It would appear, however, that the Fijian method of preparing the kava beverage was originally distinctive.

Dr. Fraser, describing the usual method of making this intoxicating drink, says that the necessities are a supply of the root, a bowl, a strainer, a cup, and a good array of strong teeth in human jaws.

"The plant is pulled up, root, stem and branches; the twigs, branches and the greater part of the stem are broken off; for it is only the lower stem and rhizomes that are used; the portion selected is beaten on the ground to clear it of earth; it is also scraped and cut into pieces; the skin is then torn off with the teeth; if not to be used immediately, the pieces are thrown into the house that they may be dried and stored there; if the drink is to be made at once, the collected heap of *kava* is handed over to the kava-chewers, who sit in a circle and are mostly young people—virgins preferred—from fourteen to twenty years of age, the belles of the town. These crush it between their teeth, and, after it is masticated, they place the fibre in the *kava* bowl—a large wooden vessel kept for the purpose; when there is enough of the masticated root there, pure water is poured into the bowl, and the whole is stirred with the hand; if allowed to settle for a little, it speedily ferments; the liquid in the bowl is then strained with *pulu* (coco-nut) fibre, and borne to the guests in a cup—a coco-nut which from saturation and frequent use, often looks as if made of tortoise-shell—to the highest in rank first."

Dr. Inglis found that in some island groups the chewing of the root was done by young men instead of young women.

Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, quoting different authorities and writing also from personal knowledge as an investigator, tells us that in the Torres Islands "each man makes the drink for himself, using special small cups in a manner fully regulated by custom". The small cups are used also on the Banks' Islands, but there one man chews the root for several others, while the ritual is non-

Polynesian. On Tana, where the Polynesian name of the root is used, the root is chewed by the men who are to drink, and boys prepare the liquid in a wooden trough. A supply for three men is first prepared. After it is drunk a fresh supply is prepared for another three, and so on. Boys chew the root on Eromanga. Dr. W. H. R. Rivers writes regarding the varying customs:

"An essential distinction between the different methods is that in Polynesia and Fiji *kava* is always prepared in quantity, and then shared out among those present, or among the more important persons in the assembly, while in Melanesia the whole proceeding has a far more individual character. Each man makes it for himself in the Torres, two men make it for one another in Pentecost, or one man prepares the substance in turn for a number of men in the Banks. In association with this more individual character we find that, in place of the large bowl in which the kava of Polynesia and Fiji is prepared, the Melanesians of the northern New Hebrides, Banks and Torres Islands make it in small cups from which they drink."<sup>1</sup>

The Melanesian kava-drinking customs are so closely associated with fundamental religious practices and ideas that the use of kava cannot be wholly accounted for by their comparatively recent introduction from Polynesia. It is more probable that, as Dr. Rivers suggests, ancient practices may have in some areas been modified by Polynesian influence. But he finds this view difficult when considering the fact that in the Reef Islands, the culture of which is largely Polynesian, kava is not drunk at all. He therefore asks whether the use of kava may not have been a practice among the aborigines of Melanesia "which was taken over by the immigrants into that area". But the Polynesian custom, with its marked differences in procedure, cannot be accounted for in this

<sup>1</sup> W. H. R. Rivers, *The History of Melanesian Society*, London, 1914, Vol. II, pp. 243 et seq.



way. The more probable explanation is that the Melanesian customs are due to immigrant influence, not necessarily Polynesian. The "Kava people" influenced both the Melanesian and Polynesian areas, their stream of culture mixing with the local cultures. A notable fact is that kava drinking was unknown among the Maoris of New Zealand and the mixed peoples of Easter Island. If the custom were purely Polynesian, this should not have been the case.

Of special interest and significance are the references to kava in Polynesian religious literature. To appreciate these it is necessary in the first place to know that the kava plant can be propagated from shoots, is of slow growth, and loves stony and shady places. In Samoa it was cultivated under trees, and the trade winds were supposed to favour its growth. Mr. Pratt, the missionary,<sup>1</sup> has translated Samoan folk-songs regarding kava in which occur the lines:

"My little piece of kava I place in Sina-sina,  
Where its leaves will be blown upon by the breeze. . . .  
The kava of Aunu'u and Alofau  
The gentle trade winds blow on it. . . .  
The kava that was planted by Pava  
(Is at) Sauā-e-'ava, on the sea side of the road,  
And at Malae-'ava on the landward side of the road.  
The kava is spread out to dry; the stem of the kava is yellow;  
The kava that was planted amongst the stones and on the rock.  
But it is overshadowed by the leaves of the fagafaga tree;  
Its pith is white like the *sigano* blossoms.  
O kava, the food of chiefs.

"They . . . planted kava by the roots of the bread-fruit tree.  
O kava, kava, grow up, thou kava.  
Where shall the kava grow?

<sup>1</sup> *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, Vol. XXV, pp. 108, et seq.



'Mid the stones it shall grow; it shall grow on the rock;  
 It shall stand tiptoe and bite off the fruit of the *fala*;  
 It shall stand 'mid the leaves of the *fagafaga*."

It was believed that kava had origin in the sky-world:

"Whence came this kava?

It is the kava from the eastern group;

That was the kava that came down from the heavens.

Savā is that land towards the east;

The kava [plant] was brought and distributed

To our Samoan group which is one."

Sauā is a point to the east of Taū, one of the small Manu'a islands. The kava, according to a Samoan myth, was first planted there by a mortal named Pava, who, curiously enough, was given an evil reputation. He obtained the plant and got to know of its virtues by prying on the gods.

The myth tells that Tangaloa-le-Māna, the miracle-working god of the Eighth Heaven, chanced to pay a visit to the earth. He had been accustomed to drink kava in the sky-world, where it was the "nectar" of the gods, and he sent his attendants to obtain some.

"They brought down not only the bowl, strainer and cup, but the whole of a *kava* plant which they had, in their hurry, torn up by the roots. Of this Tangaloa threw away the most part, as it is only the 'rhizome' or root stem, that is chewed. Pava, a mortal, who saw all that was done, watching an opportunity, gathered up the portions which the god had rejected, and planted them; they grew luxuriantly, and thenceforward men enjoyed the god-like drink."

When the god had had the kava root chewed, he called for fresh water with which to make the beverage. "The rain came down in torrents at his will; it rained night and day; it rained even in sunshine; and Pava was swept away by the flood, but escaped drowning."

The Samoan lay which contains this myth of the god's visit to the earth, where he suddenly desired to drink kava, contains the lines:

"Now then, O Telemu and Malifai (Tangaloa says),  
 You two will run up to the heavens;  
 There the kava grows hidden away [in a shady covert];  
 You will pull it up with its stem;  
 You will break off [the part to be used] and beat it (clean it) on  
 the ground;  
 You will peel off the bark;  
 You will tear off the skin with your teeth until there is  
 enough. . . ."

"Tangaloa longed for some fresh water,  
 For they had brought down the bowl and the strainer and the  
 kava cup.  
 Heavy rain came down;  
 Rain, rain at night:  
 It rained everywhere;  
 Oh, it was wonderful:  
 Rain fell and yet the sun was shining:  
 Rain-in-sunshine came down:  
 Pava was swept away by the swollen waters. . . .  
 Pava is a bad man,  
 He makes fun of men."

In another poem the god says:

"I am Tangaloa-le-Māna.  
 When the kava is distributed, I must be first,  
 That your lives may be washed clean."

One of the poems makes reference to "the sacred kava chewers". In each chief's household a company of young people (male or female) were kept as kava chewers.

Kava was supposed to have been carried to the Tongan and Fijian island groups by a fabulous bird:

"The bird of Fuipau carried it;  
 The gentle winds blow on it;  
 Its bushy wings are spread out  
 [On arrival] the kava twigs were broken off and put out to be  
 aired.

From it Tonga and Fiji had their kava."

To nearer islands it was transported by human beings:

"Fanga-ima, a common man of Tafuna,  
 Brought the kava from Manu'a  
 To Laveai and Lua-le-manga."

Kava was in Rarotonga supposed to grow in the Underworld where the repulsive hag Miru waits for ghosts who are caught in her great net of "innumerable meshes". The Rev. William Wyatt Gill<sup>1</sup> writes in this connexion:

"The grand secret of Miru's power over her intended victims is the kava root.<sup>2</sup> It consists of one vast root, and is named by her 'Tevo'o', being her own peculiar property. The three sorts of 'kava' known in the upper world were originally branches off this enormous root ever-growing in Avaiki. Miru's four lovely daughters are directed to prepare bowls of this strong kava for her unwilling visitors. Utterly stupefied with the draught, the unresisting victims are borne off to the oven and cooked. Miru, with her son and peerless daughters, subsist on these human spirits. The refuse is thrown to her servants, Akaanga and others. Such is the inevitable fate of those who die a natural death, i.e. of women, cowards and children. They are annihilated."

The ghosts of warriors slain in battle, on the other hand, ultimately reach the sky-world.

Although there is no mention of the fact in the Samoan lays, the kava was introduced into the Hawaiian Islands, where it became known as "awa". The myths

<sup>1</sup> *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, London, 1876, pp. 161 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> Miru prepares the kava drink to stupefy her intended victims.



tell that the gods Kane and Kanaloa (Tane and Tangaloa) travelled about collecting kava roots. When the kava was chewed, they looked for fresh water. Kanaloa said to Kane at Kalihi: "Our awa is good, but there is no water in this place. Where can we find water for this awa?" Kane carried a "large strong staff", and he thrust it through the hard lava. Up bubbled a well of fresh water which is still known as ka-puka-wai-o-kalihi. The gods then prepared the beverage and were stupefied, and they "lay down and slept". Kane and Kanaloa are said to have made many wells on all the Hawaiian islands for the purpose of preparing the kava drink. When a "watchman" refused to allow them to pull up kava, they called him "stingy" and killed him.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Fraser says that in the Hervey Group the use of kava was confined to "chiefs, priests and the old wise-men". No others drank the beverage. Mr. Craighill Handy<sup>2</sup> finds that "everywhere it was used kava was strictly forbidden to women, and in certain of the groups (in Polynesia) it was reserved for chiefs alone".

Dr. Turner, the missionary, states that in Samoa kava was served when a party of chiefs sat down to a meal.

"At their ordinary meals few partake of it but the father and other senior members of the family. It is always taken before, and not after the meal. Among a formal party of chiefs, it is handed round in a coco-nut shell cup, with a good deal of ceremony. When the cup is filled, the name, or title rather, of the person for whom it is intended is called out; the cup-bearer takes it to him, he receives it, drinks it off, and returns the cup to be filled again as the 'portion' of another chief."

The same writer adds that "the old men consider

<sup>1</sup> W. D. Westervelt, *Legends of Old Honolulu*, pp. 32 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin* 34, Honolulu. 1927, p. 46.

that a little of it strengthens them and prolongs life; and often they have a cup the first thing in the morning."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Turner, giving fuller details in his later work,<sup>2</sup> writes:

"The head of the family, in taking his cup of 'ava (kava) at the commencement of the evening meal, would pour a little of it on the ground as a drink-offering to the gods, and, all being silent, he would utter aloud the following prayer:

"'Here is 'ava for you, O gods! Look kindly towards this family; let it prosper and increase: and let us all be kept in health. Let our plantations be productive; let fruit grow; and may there be abundance of food for us, your creatures.

"'Here is 'ava for you, our war gods! Let there be a strong and numerous people for you in this land.'"

Dr. Fraser<sup>3</sup> says that "in some of the smaller islands of Polynesia, the drink was prepared solely as a libation to the gods. . . . In Samoa the youths, when they were fully tattooed and thus entered on the privileges of men, were allowed for the first time to drink the kava at entertainments." In the Hervey Group it used to be believed that no response from the gods could be obtained "unless the officiating priest had first been presented with a bowl of kava. Then he fell into a frenzy, and the oracle was announced in a most unearthly voice. With the kava, cooked taro and fish were given to the priest; without them, the necessary state of frenzy would not appear."<sup>4</sup>

Kava was used to induce inspiration in Niue,<sup>5</sup> and in Hawaii "to strengthen the spirits".<sup>6</sup>

Craighill Handy tells that in the Marquesas, too, "the prophets drank much kava and it is probable that the narcotic effect, which is sedative, aided in the practice

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteen Years in Polynesia*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Samoa*, pp. 115-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, Vol. XXV, p. 99, and *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. I, pp. 164-89.

<sup>5</sup> Basil Thomson, *Savage Island*, p. 115.

<sup>6</sup> A. Fornander, *B. P. Bishop Museum Mem.*, Vol. VI, p. 112.



By Courtesy of Director, Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.  
**DOUBLE CANOE, FIJI**





of their prophetic art". He says that in Western Polynesia kava was undoubtedly used to bring about "the state spoken of as possession". The medium gazed fixedly "at some symbol of the deity such as a whale's tooth or a club".<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Craighill Handy draws attention to the close association in Polynesia of the kava drinking with the Tangaloa cult. "In Samoa the first cup was always raised and waved heavenwards with a circular motion, after which the contents were poured on the ground as an offering to the patron god."<sup>2</sup> He is of opinion that the worship of Tangaloa was introduced into Polynesia by a later group of people than that which worshipped Tu, Tane, and Rongo. This later group he takes from southern China, identifying its members with a river people known as the Tan-kah-lo (the egg-family-people). He thinks the Tangaloa-Polynesians exhibit "Chinese characteristics" both in their culture and physical characters, and writes:

"The discovery of this correspondence in names and in culture traits has led to the conclusion that a group of these sea-faring Chinese, whose religion combined the strictly Chinese worship and philosophy with Buddhism, came into Polynesia, intermarried with Caucasoid Polynesian women, and through organizing ability and genius for trade, succeeded ultimately in dominating Samoa, Tonga and the Society Islands, and later Hawaii and other groups."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. W. H. R. Rivers has found evidence, as has been indicated, that kava drinking in Melanesia was not necessarily of Polynesian origin. Mr. Craighill Handy, however, insists that the ceremonial drinking is "peculiarly and distinctively Tangaloa-Polynesian", and he proceeds to say:

<sup>1</sup> *Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin* 24, pp. 162-3.  
(1928)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 322.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 325-6.  
6

"Although kava was drunk through central Polynesia and Hawaii, the ceremonialism, which is often mistakenly supposed to be associated with it wherever it was used, was limited to Samoa and Tonga and the islands dominated by them."

He rejects the view that the socio-religious ceremony of kava drinking was a product of local evolution, and writes:

"On the contrary I believe it to represent the adaptation to Polynesian conditions of the Buddhist ceremonial tea drinking which is still preserved in Japan, to which country it was imported from China in the Sung dynasty."

He points out in this connexion that "the formal posture of the Samoan chief, seated cross-legged, resting the right foot, with sole up, on the left thigh, reproduces about as well as can be done in common life the conventional posture in which Buddha is depicted sitting in meditation, which was the conventional posture of the tea-drinking Zen Buddhists in Japan".<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Handy is not the first to suggest that Buddhist influence reached Polynesia. In his *Hawaiki* (pp. 70-1) Mr. S. Percy Smith calls attention to the story of Puta, "the man who was commissioned to call on all the people in the world to believe in God". He ultimately called upon Raki (Rangi, god of the sky) to overturn the earth and cause a deluge. "Puta and his people alone were saved." Mr. Smith held, however, that except perhaps this Puta story there is in Polynesia "no trace of Buddhist doctrines whatever". His view is that the Polynesians left India before the spread of the Buddhist faith.<sup>2</sup>

✓ Mr. Craighill Handy's theory that Polynesian ceremonial kava drinking was a local development of the Chinese-Buddhist ceremonial tea drinking, seems less

<sup>1</sup> E. S. Craighill Handy, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.



convincing than the view that it was connected rather with soma drinking in India. The soma-liquor, like the kava-liquor, is intoxicating.

Soma was the nectar of the Hindu gods and priests. Little is known of the soma-plant, but it is referred to in the *Rigveda* as growing on the mountains. Its twigs or shoots are said to be "brown", "ruddy", or "tawny". As it was difficult to procure, substitutes were ultimately allowed. Macdonell and Keith find, from references in Vedic literature, that "the plant was pounded with stones or in a mortar". It was then "caused to swell" by being "steeped in water". This made it "increase its yield of juice". The juice, which was "brown", "tawny", or "ruddy", had "a fragrant smell". An ancient Hindu medical work refers to the plant as "ill smelling". The flavour was "pungent". Milk and sometimes honey were mixed with the liquor. The preparation of the intoxicating soma beverage was attended by ceremony and the gods received their share.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Haug says that the Hindu priestly sacrificer, being supposed to be "received among the gods", partook of the divine soma beverage. "The drinking of the soma-juice makes him a new man . . . purifying and sanctifying him." The gods are strengthened by it. A Vedic hymn has the passage: "O soma, poured out for Indra to drink, flow on purely in a most sweet and most exhilarating current." Another passage states that "no one can withstand Indra in battle when he has drunk it". The priests, who partake of the liquor, addressed the god:

"We have drunk the soma, we have become immortal, we have entered into light, we have known the gods. What can an

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Macdonell and A. B. Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, pp. 474 et seq.

enemy now do to us, or what can the malice of any mortal effect, O thou immortal god?"<sup>1</sup>

Like the kava-plant of Polynesia, the soma-plant of India was supposed to be of celestial origin. Muir writes in this connexion:

"In the *S'atapatha Brāhmaṇa*, III, 2, 4, 1ff., it is related that the soma existed formerly in the sky, whilst the gods were here (on earth). They desired to get it, that they might employ it in sacrifice. The Gāyatrī flew to bring it for them."

Another passage states:

"The soma existed in the sky. The Gāyatrī became a bird and brought it."<sup>2</sup>

The soma was personified as a deity and was identified with the moon. "May the god Soma free me, he whom they call the moon," says a hymn of the *Atharva-veda* (XI, 6, 7).

In the *Mahābhārata*<sup>3</sup> the gigantic bird Garuda robs amrita (soma) from its guardians, the Gandharvas who dwell in the mountains. The liquor is carried by the bird to the Nāgas (serpent deities), but when these are engaged, before drinking, in religious exercises, the god Indra robs the amrita and carries it to the sky-world.

It is interesting to find that in Polynesia Tangaloa, or his "messenger", sometimes assumes a bird form.

The Hindu soma myths and customs which appear to have reached Polynesia by sea, seem also to have filtered overland into northern Europe.

In Scandinavian mythology the liquor of longevity is "a cool, bitter drink". It contains three liquids:

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. V, pp. 261-2.

<sup>2</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 263-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Adi Parva*, Sections XXXII-XXXIV.



“ Urd’s strength,  
Cool-cold sea,  
Son’s liquid.”

“ Son ” is one of the names of the fountain of Mimir of the Underworld. Urd’s fountain gives life to the world tree, and “ cool-cold sea ” is apparently a reference to “ the mother-fountain of waters ”. In Mimir’s well the eye of Odin was “ hidden ”, but the origin and meaning of this eye-sacrifice is obscure. Odin pledges his eye to obtain a draught from the well. Mimir drinks from this well, and the liquor is referred to as “ mead ”. The vala (soothsayer) chants:

“ All know I, Odin—yea, where thou hast hidden  
Thine eye in the wondrous well of Mimir,  
Who each morn from the pledge of All-father  
Drinks the mead.”

When the dead reach the Norse Hades, they drink mead from a drinking-horn—“ Fann’s brewing ”, as it is referred to. Balder receives this liquor:

“ Here stands for Balder  
Mead brewed,  
Clear *veigar*.”

“ After tasting of it (the mead), the god (Balder), who had descended to Hades, regained his broken strength, and the earth again grew green.”

In Northern mythology there are traces of the blending of more than one mead myth. We gather that the Fjalar precious mead is captured by the giant Suttung, also called Fjalar. A feast is being held at his hall, and Odin arrives in disguise. Odin becomes “ drunk, very drunk, at Fjalar’s ”. After the banquet is over, Odin flies away as an eagle carrying mead to the gods.



As in India, this mead is associated with the moon. Poets (skalds) are supposed to receive inspiration from moon-mead (the scaldic mead). We gather from Saxo that the horse of Balder produces wells by tramping upon the ground. Phol, Fal, and Falr are variants of Balder's name. Rydberg draws attention to Grimm's references to a "Pholes" well in Thuringa, a "Fal's" well in the Frankish Steigerwald, and a Balder's well in Rheinphaltz. As the Hawaiian wells were dug by the two kava-drinking gods, so were apparently the Teutonic. A German folk-lay runs:

" Fal and Odin  
Went to the wood,  
Then was the foot sprained  
Of Balder's foal."

A well was thus given origin. Balder is killed by the mistletoe.<sup>1</sup> It looks as if the Northern or Teutonic mead myths are compounds of imported fragments from Asia, as are the kava myths of Polynesia, but influenced also by Greek myth, the "mead" being identified with the water of the river Lēthe. Perhaps the mistletoe was the plant originally brewed with the mead.

In the Celto-Irish Paradise the food and liquor of longevity are conspicuous. "When it rains," says one poem, "'tis ale that falls." Red berries were food of the gods, and red berries were brewed with the liquor of longevity.

In England the use of ale or wine in which ivy leaves had been steeped may be a survival of the ancient belief that ivy was a "life-giver". According to Gerarde's sixteenth-century *Herball*, "the leaves of Ivie, fresh and greene, boiled in wine, do heale old ulcers, and perfectly

<sup>1</sup> V. Rydberg, *Teutonic Mythology* (London translation), 1889; O. Bray, *The Elder*, pp. 350 et seq., 438 et seq.; *Edda*, London, 1908, p. 287 et seq.

cure those that have a venomous and malicious quality joined with them; and are a remedie against burnings and scaldings ”.

The Greek Underworld has the river Lēthe, and the dead who drink of its water forget the past and are rejuvenated. Virgil in his *Æneid* (Book VI) visions the souls obtaining from Lēthe care-expelling draughts that bring lasting oblivion and prepare them for other bodies.

On Olympus the food of the gods is ambrosia and their drink nectar, which is sweeter than honey and “fragrant”. Both nectar and ambrosia are “life-givers”.

As kava was chewed in Polynesia, so was ivy by the Mænads apparently “for inspiration as the Delphic prophetesses chewed the bay”.<sup>1</sup>

The belief that deities were addicted to and influenced by intoxicating drinks is of great antiquity.

Wine was drunk by the great gods of ancient Babylonia, and they became tipsy, when they assembled in an Upšukkinaku in the sky-world. Anšar presided over the divine council as does Tangaloa in the Samoan myths:

“They entered into the presence of Anšar and filled the [Upšukkinaku]

They kissed one another and united in assembly.

They conversed together as they were seated at the banquet.

They ate bread and prepared wine.

The sweet drink put far away their cares.

As they drank liquor their bodies became satiated.

Much they babbled and their mood was exalted.”<sup>2</sup>

A soporific drink which causes the slaughtering goddess, Hathor-Sekhet, to forget her wrath, is a feature of an Egyptian myth usually referred to as “The Destruction of Mankind”, but which might be as well

<sup>1</sup> Miss Harrison, *Prolegomena*, p. 429.

<sup>2</sup> S. Langdon *The Babylonian Epic of Creation*, Oxford, 1923, pp. 125-7.



called "The Redemption of Mankind". The human subjects of the sun-god, Re, speak slightly of him because he has grown old and frail. Re is made angry and summons the deities to an assembly. His human subjects become greatly alarmed and many flee to the hills. Re sends the goddess Sekhet against them and she slays them. For several nights she wades in their blood. Then Re resolves to save the remnant. He has seven thousand jars of beer prepared, and in the beer is put a red substance which makes the liquor the colour of blood. The beer is poured out, and when Sekhet comes in the morning she finds the fields inundated. She drinks the beer, her heart rejoices. It is told that "she went about drunken and took no more cognizance of men".

Re subsequently decreed that in celebration of this redemption of mankind soporific drinks should be provided at every New Year's feast. "The feasts of Hathor," says Wiedemann, "were festivals at which drink (beer) flowed freely and much intoxication prevailed; the inscriptions even make mention of a certain festival known as the Intoxication Festival held in her honour and celebrated at Denderah in the month of Thoth."<sup>1</sup>

In America, as in Oceania, we find that there were leaf-chewing and liquor-drinking customs. The distribution of these customs suggests cultural "drifts".

Mr. Charles Mead, assistant curator of Peruvian Archæology in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, writes regarding Peruvian narcotics as follows:

"The dried leaves of the coca plant (*Erythroxylum coca*, Lamarck), with the addition of a little lime, were chewed exactly as is the betel nut in the East. Indian carriers always have a coca bag slung at their side, and if given a good supply of these leaves will carry a heavy burden over the mountains for days with little

<sup>1</sup> A. Wiedemann, *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, London, 1897, pp. 58 et seq.



or no food. Around the necks of mummies we generally find well-filled coca-bags placed there by thoughtful relatives, that the journey to the next world may be pleasant. The very useful local anesthetic, cocaine, is derived from coca leaves. Tobacco was well known to the Peruvians, yet, it seems to have only been known as a medicine, in the form of snuff."

Beer was brewed from maize in pre-Columbian times and was called *chicha*. "In all the festive gatherings of the Indians," says Mr. Mead, "the drinking of *chicha* is still the chief feature of the occasion, and the ceremonies, whether religious or otherwise, seldom end until all are completely intoxicated."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Clark Wissler, curator of Anthropology in the American Museum of Natural History, has investigated the distribution of narcotics in the Americas. He shows that the chewing of coca leaves with lime and other alkalis still prevails along the greater part of the western coast of South America, while contiguous to the coca-chewing area is that of tobacco chewing, which also occurs along the north-west coast of the U.S.A. Mr. Wissler says that a peculiar native habit is that "the tobacco is taken with pulverized shells or ashes, ground fine in mortars; in other words, after the coca method". He adds:

"The appearance of this trait in these two disconnected areas and its analogy to the betel nut culture of Melanesia and south-eastern Asia is truly puzzling."<sup>2</sup>

In pre-Columbian Mexico intoxicating beverages which induced visions, and caused men to prophesy, to detect thieves, &c., were prepared and drunk, and the herbs used were regarded as sacred. Herbs were also chewed. The green leaf of the tobacco plant was mixed with lime and chewed like betel, and the dried leaf was

[<sup>1</sup> C. W. Mead, *Old Civilizations of Inca Land*, New York, 1924, pp. 106-7. ]

[<sup>2</sup> Clark Wissler, *The American Indian*, Oxford, 1922, pp. 35-7.

also used. The herb called *peyotl* or *peyote* (also *hikule*) was gathered to make a terrible beverage which not only intoxicated but kept the drinkers in a state of intoxication for several days. Spinden refers to it as a small variety of cactus which when eaten "induces ecstasy or stupor accompanied by colour visions and peculiar dreams", and he adds that there were elaborate ceremonies in connexion with the gathering and eating of the plant. "The religious cult of the *peyote*," he writes, "has swept over a large portion of the Great Plains of the United States, and is known even to Indians in the neighbourhood of the Great Lakes. There can be no doubt that the narcotic action of the *peyote* was known to the Aztecs, who made a ceremonial use of it under the name *teonanacatl*." <sup>1</sup>

Sahagun refers to the beverage prepared from the plant as *peyotl*.<sup>2</sup> According to a Mexican writer<sup>3</sup> the herb grows in dry and sterile soil. "The natives chew it and throw it into a wooden mortar where it is left to ferment, some leaves of tobacco being added to give it pungency." In the divination ceremonies the beverage was drunk and induced visions. Some persons as they drank chewed slices of the herb, which has a white tuberous root. Sahagun says that the Aztecs derived their knowledge of this herb from the Chichimecs. Another brew was prepared from the bark of a tree which the Mayas called *baal-che*. According to a Spanish writer it was known as *yaxha*, the first water or primal fluid. The Creator was credited with having produced it, and when he returned to the upper heaven he left it in the care of the four rain gods who had been also instructed how to produce it. As we have seen, the soma

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America*, New York, 1922, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Historia de Nueva España*, Lib. X, Cap. 20, and Lib. XI, Cap. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Diccionario Universal*, Apéndice Tom. I, p. 350.



of India and the kava of Polynesia were connected with the sky-world and rain-producing or water-finding deities.

There were also ceremonies connected with the drinking of "pulque" ("octli"), the fermented juice of the maguey plant. Father Diego Duran<sup>1</sup> says that "octli" was favoured by the gods and was offered to them. It was specially desired by the fire god, and might be sprinkled on the flames, poured round the fireplace, or placed in vases before a fire. According to Sahagun<sup>2</sup> the "octli" was poured on the hearth at four separate points—probably the cardinal points. Tezcatzoncatl, the god of drunkenness, was invoked when "octli" was thrown on a fire. According to Spinden "an intoxicating drink called *teswin* is commonly made in northern Mexico from the heart of the mescal plant. It takes the place of the famous *pulque*, the ancient beverage of the Mexican highlands."<sup>3</sup>

In the light of the comparative evidence, the view that kava drinking in Polynesia was derived from the tea-drinking ceremony of the Chinese Buddhists does not appear, as has been remarked, to be very convincing. It seems more probable that the drinking of green tea was simply a local form of the ancient and widespread custom of drinking a fluid which stimulates and inspires. The Polynesian kava lore and the kava ceremonies bear too close a resemblance to those of the Indian soma which, as we have seen, similarly intoxicates, to be regarded as either of local origin or a development of a less harmful Chinese custom. Withal, the view that the people who introduced into Polynesia the worship of Tangaloa, also introduced kava drinking, does not allow of an explanation for the absence of kava drinking in

<sup>1</sup> *Historia de los Indios de la Nueva España*, Tom. II, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> *Historia de Nueva España*, Lib. I, Cap. 13.

<sup>3</sup> H. J. Spinden, *Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America*, New York, 1922, p. 36



New Zealand, where Tangaloa was known, and its prevalence in those parts of Melanesia where Tangaloa was never heard of. As we have seen, the different Melanesian names of kava suggest that it was introduced from some other area than Polynesia. Dr. Fox inclines to identify the totem-clan people with Dr. Rivers' "Kava people".<sup>1</sup> The totem-clan organization of this people was added to the dual organization of the earlier people. These intruders into Melanesia were certainly not Chinese.

The Betel people came later. "The practice of chewing betel nut," says Dr. Fox, "is comparatively recent, but the plants may not be so. I am told that betel chewing is now rapidly displacing kava drinking in Motlav in the Banks Islands: the people had the plants before, but treated them as of no importance, and have only lately learned their use from the Solomon Islands."<sup>2</sup>

In connexion with burial ceremonies in San Cristoval there used to be "ceremonial drinking of kava". Dr. Fox says that "the root was ground in a stone basin, wrung out, and then each man drank in a small cup called *kukumanu*, and, I think, poured out a portion on the ground; but with the coming of the betel nut, kava drinking passed away, and beyond the fact that this drinking once took place, which has been confirmed by a number of independent witnesses, I can learn nothing of the ceremony."<sup>3</sup> Dr. Fox says further regarding the use of the betel mixture:

"Betel chewing, though now so widespread, and though betel nut is now so usual a sacrifice and appears in so many rites, is a comparatively recent practice. Tradition remembers the time when the ingredients were scarce and had to be bought; some Ulawa natives even estimated that the practice was not more than 200

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 216-7.

years old, but that may be an under-estimate; it is remembered that at *rihuma*, death feasts, people learning the habit (which was not yet a recognized one) used to hold kava before their mouths to hide what they were doing."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ivens infers from certain customs connected with the use of areca (betel) nuts that these originally "possessed a religious significance and were regarded as sacred". He shows that the nuts were used "(1) as propitiatory offerings to ghosts; (2) in religious ceremonial; (3) in black magic". The areca nut was used to ward off sickness and to relieve one from the anger of a protecting ghost when trespassing on the ghost's domain took place. When a canoe was about to set out on a long voyage, a priest placed in the bows some areca nuts which were dedicated to ghosts, and these were supposed to ensure a safe voyage. Offerings of areca nuts were made in the rites of the sea-spirits called the Maidens, who were supposed to direct the movements of the bonito fish. Madness and death were caused by areca nuts, or the skins of the areca fruit, when magical incantations were muttered over them.<sup>2</sup>

Of special interest in dealing with the problem of the origin and distribution of kava drinking and betel chewing, as religious customs, is the evidence drawn from the Caroline Islands. On a number of these islands the drinking of kava was an important religious custom. The root was not chewed as in certain parts of Polynesia, but crushed on a slab of stone. According to Mr. Andrew Cheyne, the pounded root was mixed with water and served in cups made of coco-nuts. Special attention was paid to rank. The first cup was presented either to the highest chief present, or to the chief priest. Prayers

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> W. C. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-east Solomons*, London, 1927, pp. 285 *et seq.*



were muttered over the first cup. On Ponape the kava was often drunk to excess. When a king was ill, it was quaffed with ceremony in front of his house, and the gods were invoked to cure him. When priests invoked the deities at sacred stones, kava was drunk before prayers were recited.<sup>1</sup>

In Yap, one of the Carolines, on the other hand, the betel mixture is chewed as in the Pelew and Marianne Islands. There the areca grows wild and the supplies of the nut are consequently plentiful. On the Pelew Islands, however, the plant is cultivated with difficulty, and has to be tabooed for periods and especially for some time before a great festival at which many influential guests have to be entertained. Tobacco and turmeric are also cultivated. The islanders are "passionately fond of smoking cigarettes rolled up in banana leaves. When a man is about to plant tobacco, he invites the gods of the ground to go away to some other place because he wishes to plant tobacco on that particular plot of ground. Turmeric is cultivated by women who observe at planting it the same sort of ritual which the men observe at planting tobacco."

The women of the Pelew Islands chew betel and are believed to derive inspiration from the mixture when engaged in a divination ceremony. "Betel chewing" takes place in connexion with the expulsion of a ghost. If an enemy beheads a man and carries off the head, his relatives are shut up in a house, being in a state of "ceremonial pollution". They chew betel which has been enchanted by a wizard until the ghost departs to the enemy's country, there to pursue the head-hunters who shortened the man's spell of life.<sup>2</sup> When a priest is

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Cheyne, *A Description of Islands in the Western Pacific*, London, 1852, pp. 115 and 120 *et seq.*; Dr. Hult, *Ethnologisches Notizblatt*, II, 2 (Berlin, 1901), pp. 1 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*. Vol. III, pp. 220, 235-6, 252.



installed, he receives an offering of betel and areca nuts on behalf of the deity who is supposed to dwell in him.<sup>1</sup>

The areca was connected with the sky-world as was the kava plant and the soma plant.

Dr. Ivens gives a story of the wonderful boy called "The Delectable Lizard" who, like the Hindu god Indra, set out on his adventures as soon as he was born. At a village of Ulawa he was told to climb for areca nuts, but as he climbed the palm began to extend upwards. "Whenever he tried to pull the nuts, the tree lengthened out and in time it hit the sky and there the boy stayed. Running along the sky he reached a rainbow which he bent down and descended upon Leda, where he was found when the fleet returned." Dr. Ivens thinks this story may be one of defying an introducer of the betel mixture, but the sky-world connexion cannot be overlooked.

Of special interest is the sea-spirit named *Pua tangalu*, which means "Areca nuts in abundance". He is head of the sea-spirits at Ulawa, and is supposed to dwell at Wango in San Cristoval on the hills.<sup>2</sup> The chewers of the betel mixture must have introduced this sea-spirit.

It would appear that the chewing of the betel mixture, like the drinking of the kava beverage, is rooted in religious customs which had their origin outside the Oceanic area. As was the case in connexion with the preparation of soma in India, substitutes were sought for when the plant which was usually made use of became scarce, or could not be grown in a new area of settlement. It is, however, the habit of deriving inspiration from a plant, whether by chewing or preparing a drink, which is really important. Once an effective substitute plant was discovered, its use was assured. It became a source of

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ivens, *op. cit.*, pp. 436 et seq. 481

inspiration and that was all that really mattered. The intoxicated person was able to induce the condition known as "possession", and was then supposed to be capable of beholding prophetic visions, of detecting the sources of evil or wrongdoing, and of entering into communion with the spirits or gods whose "life substance" or nectar was supposed to be contained in the sacred plant. At first the habit of taking narcotics was confined to the priests who, by so doing, imitated the gods. Kava drinking, as we have seen, was taboo to women in Polynesia and in some areas was drunk by priests, kings, and chiefs alone. A similar restriction appears to have obtained in connexion with the use of the *peyote* drink in pre-Columbian America. The chewing of the betel mixture in Melanesia, like the chewing of the coca-leaf mixture in pre-Columbian America, was apparently less restricted, and in time the habit became very general in areas. It may well be that the Melanesian betel-people and the American coca-people were carriers of a similar culture. The American custom of drinking intoxicating liquors to induce the prophetic state appears to be one of the several customs which links the pre-Columbian peoples of the New World with those of the Old. As has been indicated, there are in Oceania, as in the Americas, definite areas in which the leaf-chewing and herb-brewing customs, introduced by intruders, are particularly prevalent.







By courtesy of H. F. Tillema, Illnesses, Holland.

#### A BILIAN OR BILAN (WITCH DOCTOR) TREATING A SICK MAN

He first dances round the patient with a small lamp on his head while others beat drums. This lamp is in the photo grasped in his left hand. When squatting, as shown, he places statues on the patient's body, murmuring mysterious charms to extract the sickness in the form of a small stone which he produces. (As a rule, the ceremony is performed indoors. Here the "doctor" is performing out of doors at Mr. Tillema's request.)

## CHAPTER V

### Stone Worship in Melanesia

Spirits and Stones in the New Hebrides—Missionary Use of Stone "God"—Banks' Islands Sacred Stones—Sun Stone and Ghost Stone—Stones as Fertilizers in Melanesia and Mexico—Fijian Stone God in Tree Hollow—A Scottish Custom—Natural Stone Circles Sacred—Shape of Stone Indicative of Spirit connected with It—Stone Markings—No Souls in Stones—Spirit Associated with Stone, not the Stone, which Acts—"Stone Worship" not "Simple" or "Natural"—Priests of Sacred Stones—Stones painted Red—Mosquito Stone—Snake Guardians of Sacred Places—Sacred Rocks—Priests of San Cristoval—Men, Animals, Fish, &c., become Stones—Stones as temporary Habitations of Spirits—Winged Serpent Stone that Spoke—Footprints on Rock—Magic-working Stone placed in Church—Weather Stones—God's Stone wrapped in Union Group—An Irish wrapped God-stone—Rossel Island Weather Stones and Disease Stones—Stones buried in Leaves—Cairns in Melanesia and Scotland—Fijian Gods and Stones—Deified Mortals—Standing Stones as Gods and Goddesses—Fijian God half serpent and half stone—Hindu traits of Fijian Deities—Stones and Weapons as Shrines of Gods—San Cristoval Sacred Stone and Sacred Tree—Night-shining Stone—Whistling Stone—A Noah Stone—Stones connected with Sharks, Serpents, Ghosts, and Heavenly Bodies—Sun Stone and Star Stone of Yap—Problem of "Stone Worship"—Spirits and Ghosts.

Ancient religious practices connected with what is known as "stone worship", were known throughout Melanesia. It is found, however, that these were not everywhere of similar character. On the island of Anai-teum, in the New Hebrides, for instance, "the idols", as the Rev. Dr. John Inglis has recorded, "were all, like the Jewish altars, of uncarved, unhewn stones", with the exception of the idol of a *natmas* (spiritual being) named Tuatau, which "was of wood, a piece of bread-

fruit tree . . . a rudely shaped, uncouth figure, its countenance only very slightly resembling the 'human face divine'." The *natmas* known as Rangitafu, which belonged to the district of Nohmunjap, was "a block of whinstone, about five feet long, a foot and a half broad, and a foot thick. He was a sea-god, and presided over shipwrecks."

When the missionaries were erecting their Teachers' Institution, the chief, who had become a Christian convert, had the whinstone god placed on a frame of wood and carried by thirty men "two miles on their shoulders". It was proposed that this sacred stone should be laid in the foundation of the Christian building. "But," writes Dr. Inglis, "we did not hide him away underground. I thought we could utilize Rangitafu to a better purpose. . . . As the stone was admirably adapted for the front-door step of the Institution, we set it apart for that purpose," that "it might remain as a perpetual trophy to the power of the Gospel." For twenty-eight years it was "trodden underfoot by everyone that has entered into that temple of ours, in which the Word of God has been taught, and the elements of a liberal education have been communicated".<sup>1</sup>

The early Christian missionaries in our own country similarly utilized the sacred stones of the pagans, and some of these have been found embedded in the walls of ancient church buildings. In Scotland they even had stones similar to those used by the pagans erected at various centres, copying faithfully the pagan symbols, and adding to these the symbol of the Christian cross and other symbols.

This process of investing pagan relics with a Christian character, and imparting a new significance to the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. John Inglis, *In the New Hebrides*, London, 1887, pp. 32-3.



pagan symbols, resembled other processes of pre-Christian date. Pagan cults similarly underwent a process of fusion in early times, an intruding cult absorbing the earlier cult in this area and that. It is consequently found that the complexes which resulted vary in different districts and at different periods. We must, therefore, study apart the religious phenomena of separate areas to discover their particular significance, and note variations of beliefs and practices.

In the Banks' Islands "stone worship" was connected with the worship of the sun and of the ghosts of ancestors. Dr. Codrington writes in this connexion:

"To make sunshine it might be enough only to smear a standing stone with red earth; but it was very effectual to wind about a very round stone, a *vat loa*, sunstone, with red braid, and stick it with owls' feathers to represent rays, singing in a low voice the proper spell, and then to hang it on some high tree, a banyan or a casuarina in a sacred place. The stone to represent the sun might also be laid upon the ground with a circle of white rods radiating from it for its beams."

"Ghost stones" were supposed to be connected with the ghosts of the dead. Dr. Codrington writes regarding these:

"There are stones of a remarkably long shape called in the Banks' Islands *tamate gangan*, that is 'Eating Ghost'; these are so powerful from the presence with them of a ghost, not of a spirit, that if a man's shadow fall on one it will draw out his soul from him, so that he will die."

Stones of this class were used to guard houses. Anyone sent by an owner to his stone-guarded house during his absence, had on approaching the entrance to call out the owner's name, "lest the ghost should think he has bad intentions and do him a mischief".

Some "ghost stones" were so small that they could be "hung as amulets (*soasoa*) about a man's neck to keep him safe in danger". Others helped a warrior to cast his weapons straightly and strongly. "There were others that women would take with them to bed in hopes of children." Other portable stones were laid at the roots of food-yielding trees or buried in cultivated plots to ensure good crops.

The early Spanish Christian teachers in Mexico knew of a similar custom among the Aztecs. Bartholomè de Alva refers to them in a passage in his *Confessionary*. Green-stone images in human or frog form were buried in the ground, and the penitent was asked by the priest:

"Dost thou possess at this very time little idols of green stone, or frogs made of it?

"Dost thou put them out in the sun to be warmed?

"Dost thou keep them wrapped in cotton coverings, with great respect and veneration?

"Dost thou believe, and hold for very truth, that these green stones give thee food and drink, even as thine ancestors believed, who died in their idolatry? Dost thou believe that they give thee success and prosperity and good things, and all that thou hast and wishest? Because we know very well that many of you so believe at this very time." <sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Smythe <sup>2</sup> tells of a small stone which was regarded as a god:

"In the afternoon we left Namúsi, and ascended the secluded and lovely valley in which it lies. On reaching the sacred place whence the Réwa god, Wairúa, was said to have drifted, we stopped to examine it more carefully, and asked the guides to point out the exact spot. They indicated a hole in a small tree by the side of the stream, a few yards from the path. Manóah put his hand into the hole and brought out an oval stone of very regular form, about the

<sup>1</sup> Bartholomè de Alva, *Confessionario en Lengua Mexicana*, fol. 9, quoted by Bancroft.

<sup>2</sup> *Ten Months in Fiji*, 1864, pp. 77-8.





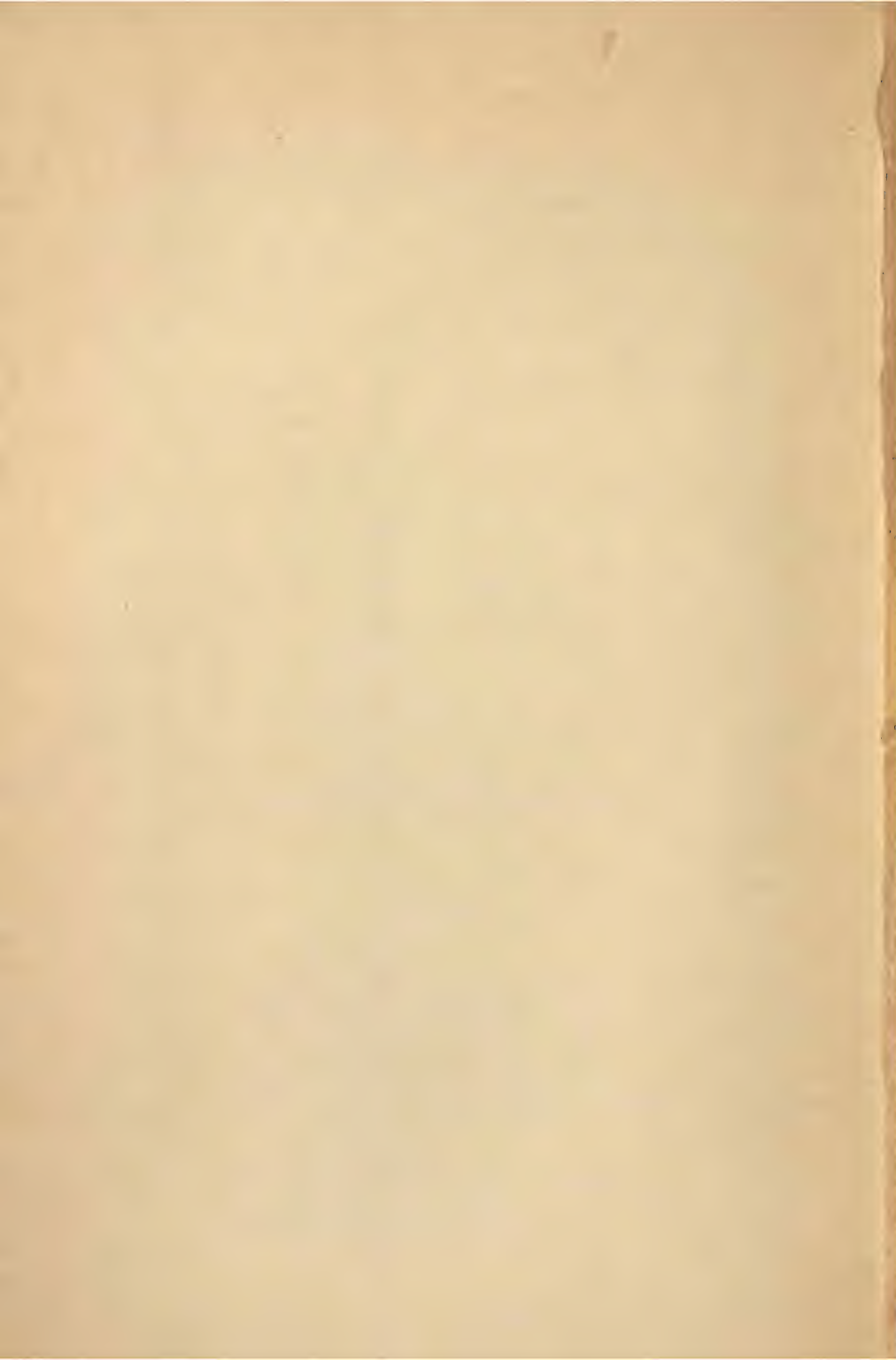
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By courtesy of H. P. Tillema, Bitterzand, Holland.

#### FEMALE BILIAN

A female Bilian, who having sung and danced to the accompaniment of a drum and a gong, pretends to extract an object from it. With the disappearance of this object the illness is supposed to end.





size of a swan's egg. The guide said that was the god. Manóah again put in his hand and brought out some small stones of a similar shape, which they said were the god's children. We then began to question them about the god, on which they looked very grave, and pressed us to move on. Manóah wanted to throw the stones away, but as the act would only have irritated the natives, without doing any good, we desired him to restore them as he had found them."

The writer is familiar with a rowan tree on Cromarty hill which formerly stood on the side of a path. The path was diverted by the local proprietor who was aware of the superstitious practices connected with the tree, and with a stone near it known as "the spitting stone". It was customary to throw stones at the tree to ascertain from the direction in which they rebounded whether it was safe for an individual that day to climb the rocks. In a hollow in the tree until recently white quartz stones were to be found. A local fisherman told the writer that stones were deposited there "for luck" by men setting out on voyages, especially during the herring-fishing season. This custom looks like a relic of the sort of paganism met with by Mrs. Smythe in Fiji.

Some Melanesian stones were supposed to be inhabited by *vui* (spirits) which had turned into stones; some stones in the sea were regarded as "men of old time turned into stones", and some stones were supposed to have "much spiritual power" being "the bodily presentment of the spirits". Some cause "sickness of the soul", and some have "great power in a charm".

It was not necessary to make a place sacred by setting up standing stones. Dr. Codrington<sup>1</sup> writes in this connexion:

"At Losalav in Saddle Island there is near the beach a natural

<sup>1</sup> *The Melanians*, pp. 173 et seq.

ring of stones which has been from time immemorial a sacred place. The people call the ring a fence, the space within it a garden, and the stones that lie within yam, banana, kava pepper and other roots and fruits commonly planted by them. These stones were used for offerings of money and sweet-smelling leaves, in the belief that the plants corresponding to the stones would flourish and abound."

Dr. Codrington found that "the character and influence of the spirit connected with any sacred stone was judged by the shape of the stone". He illustrates this as follows:

"If a man came upon a large stone with a number of small ones beneath it, lying like a sow among her litter, he was sure that to offer money upon it would bring him pigs. Such a stone is Ro Tortoros at Mota; another Merina, found and named from its shape the Pig; his wealth in pigs resulted from his discovery."

We often see on the ancient standing stones in Britain "cup markings", rings and other mysterious symbols. Some markings are plainly artificial; others are natural or due to weathering. To the Melanesian natural markings were apparently not without their significance, and Dr. Codrington writes in this connexion:

"A stone with little discs upon it, a block of ancient coral, was good to bring in money; any fanciful interpretation of a mark on a stone or of its shape was enough to give a character to the stone and to the spirit associated with it; the stone would not have that mark or shape without a reason."

The spirits connected with stones of this kind were generally nameless. The connexion of the spirit with the stone, however, was not clearly defined.

"The stone, they say, is not the body of the spirit, nor is the



spirit like the soul of the stone, for a stone certainly has no soul; they say that the spirit is at the stone, or near the stone, and it is the spirit not the stone that acts."

It cannot be assumed that the superstitious beliefs and practices connected with stones had independent origin in Melanesia. We do not ever meet with evidence that justifies such a sweeping view. Melanesian "stone worship" was not as "simple" as might appear "on the surface". Indeed, it was of rather complex character. The people who first introduced "stone worship" (a somewhat misleading term) appear to have perpetuated also the haunting memories of an elaborate faith in which a priestly class figured as prominently as did the Druids of Gaul, and the Magi of Persia. Dr. Codrington writes in this connexion:

"Some of these stones have an ancient established sanctity; only the few who know how to approach the spirit<sup>1</sup> will visit them for sacrifice, all others pass by with awe, and will not tread the sacred ground about them. If by any mishap one finds that he has intruded on a sacred place, he hastens to engage the services of the man who knows the stone to make an offering to the spirit, lest he should suffer from accident or sickness."

Mr. W. E. Armstrong, dealing with "stone worship" on Rossel Island, the most easterly of the Louisiade group, tells of a sacred stone connected with a sago palm which, if touched, was supposed to cause thunder and lightning. It, however, when propitiated by the priest at the proper season, brought an abundance of sago and calm weather.

"At the end of the south-east season, the priest of the sago *yaba* (sacred place) repairs to it with a number of others and sits down close to the shelter in which the stone lies. He alone is in

<sup>1</sup> The spirit in the stone, or associated with the stone.

possession of a certain verbal formula, which enables him to approach and touch the stone with safety."

A ceremonial feast of sago is partaken of and the sacred place being cleansed, a fresh shelter is made for the sacred stone.

"Finally the stone is covered with red paint by the priest and is placed in its new shelter. Only the priest may handle the stone and tread on the ground in its immediate vicinity: those who accompany him are not allowed beyond a certain mark, as it is believed that the violation of this taboo would arouse the maleficent reaction."<sup>1</sup>

One reason for providing the stone with a shelter is the belief that if the red paint smeared over it were washed off by rain, the sago would be uneatable.

Mr. Armstrong tells of another stone which was supposed to have been placed in the *yaba* by Wonajö, the chief deity who was a snake god, and like Oannes (Ea) of the Persian Gulf, taught the people all they knew. This stone was visited when there happened to be "a plague of mosquitoes". The priest cleaned the stone and poured on it the juice of a lime, "incanting the while, uttering the names of various gods and ending up with that of Wonajö, the most important of all. The neglect of the latter would cause the mosquitoes to become even more numerous."

The *yaba* of Rossel Island plays an important part in the lives of the inhabitants. "Generally," says Mr. Armstrong, "it contains a visible stone, or some other object, such as a tree, which, in some cases at least, does not differ in appearance from other stones and trees. The *yaba*, as a rule, has also a guardian, generally a snake, which is liable to swell up and devour any

<sup>1</sup> That is, cause a violent thunderstorm.



unauthorized person who approaches." In one *yaba* Mr. Armstrong found that the "sacred stone" was "nothing but a bit of outcropping volcanic rock".<sup>1</sup> In Scotland some outcrops of rock, as well as standing stones, are covered with mysterious "cup markings", a sure indication of ancient sacredness.

On San Cristoval, near the end of the Solomons group, Dr. Fox has similarly found that the priesthood, like the Celtic Druids, conducted sacrifices and other religious ceremonies:

"Not anyone may sacrifice in the *hare ni asi* or at the shark *pirupiru* or to the snakes. Only the priest may do so and his office is hereditary, passing from father to son, either real or adopted or bought. The priest, of course, is a man of influence. He becomes possessed, and tells the people the wishes of the ghosts."<sup>2</sup>

In San Cristoval, as elsewhere, there are spirits or ghosts in, or associated with, stones or rocks:

"Close to Heuru is a rock called Ogaia, which is a man and his money bag turned into stone, a man who committed suicide by jumping from this cliff. Not far from this is Waikiro's pig, another rock. On both north and south coasts are sets of drums, at Onetere and Onehatate, but these are only natural rocks, though the people think they are real stone drums of ancient times. . . . At Rihua is a stone sow and litter (natural rocks); close by are a rat, a comb, a pig, a creeper and a man catching a turtle. Two swordfish are two rocks near Cape Na'oni, and near by is a ray fish. In many places there are creepers turned into stone (generally stalactites). Near Haununu is a fishing rod. By Mwata are all the men drowned in the flood from which only Umaroa and his people were saved: these are rows of stone pillars. These could be multiplied indefinitely."

Rather different are the stones in which a spirit dwells or enters at times. Dr. Fox says regarding these:

<sup>1</sup> W. E. Armstrong, *Russel Island*, Cambridge, 1928, pp. 136 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> C. E. Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific*, London, 1924, p. 116.



"Some spirits lived in stones and many ghosts. All alike are called *adaro*, and it is sometimes doubtful if they are spirits or ghosts, but generally they are ghosts."

Dr. Fox mentions a legend of a man, who, to escape the vengeance of the people whom he had offended, entered a small stone with his bag and canoe, and came out again by uttering a magic word. "I should also mention," Dr. Fox adds, "the stone which was the herald of the coming of *Hatuibwari*, the Winged Serpent, a stone which spoke to the woman who found it." Some stones were roughly sculptured to resemble men, birds, and fish, or figures were carved on stones. On a rock Dr. Fox saw carved footprints of a large size.<sup>1</sup> Similar footprints are found in Fiji and in various areas influenced by Buddhism.

Dr. W. G. Ivens, dealing with a restricted area in the Solomon Islands, has found the beliefs and practices connected with stones of highly complex character. He found at *Ripoo* "a ring of stones associated with snakes". If anyone spoiled the village by cutting down fruit trees, snake sores would appear on his body.

"The altar of the Ornamented Lady at *Mwado'a* was used for causing harm by magic. Any one disturbing it would develop the sores. A stone from it was taken and placed in the foundation of the church."<sup>2</sup>

The use of small stones—"smooth stones of the stream" (*Isaiah*, lvii, 6)—was known in Polynesia. Turner says that some of these small "stone gods" were supposed to act as "rain makers and rain stoppers". He refers to certain "rain-controlling stones in a district in Samoa", and tells:

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, pp. 290 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-East Solomon*, London, 1927, p. 285.

"When there was too much rain, those who kept the stone put it to the fire to dry and cause the rain to stop. If there was great drought, they took the stone to the water and dipped it, thinking that by wetting the stone, rain would be the consequence."<sup>1</sup>

Turner found that on Tokelau island in the Union group the natives believed their first ancestor had origin in a small stone. He also tells of the custom of wrapping sacred stones which, as we have seen, was practised by the Aztecs in Mexico.

"Their great god is called Tui Tokelau, or King of Tokelau. He is supposed to be embodied in a stone, which is carefully wrapped up with fine mats and never seen by anyone but the king, and that only once a year, when the decayed mats are stripped off and thrown away. In sickness, offerings of fine mats are taken and rolled round the sacred stone, and thus it gets busked up to a prodigious size; but as the idol is exposed to the weather out of doors, night and day, the mats soon rot. No one dares to appropriate what has been offered to the god, and hence, the old mats, as they are taken off, are heaped in a place by themselves, and allowed to rot."

Dr. Turner draws attention in connexion with this wrapping custom to the treatment of a stone idol in Ireland, regarding which the Earl of Roden wrote in his *Progress of the Reformation in Ireland*:

"In the south island, in the house of a man named Monigan, a stone idol, called in the Irish 'Neevougi', has been from time immemorial religiously preserved and worshipped. This god resembles in appearance a thick roll of home-spun flannel, which arises from the custom of dedicating a dress of that material to it whenever its aid is sought; this is sewn on by an old woman, its priestess, whose peculiar care it is. Of the early history of this idol no authentic information can be procured, but its power is believed to be immense; they pray to it in time of sickness; it

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteen Years in Polynesia*, London, 1861, pp. 346-7.



is invoked when a storm is desired to dash some hapless ship upon their coast; and, again, the exercise of its power is solicited in calming the angry waves to admit of fishing or visiting the mainland." <sup>1</sup>

Mr. W. E. Armstrong refers to sacred stones on Rossel Island connected with the weather and disease. A *yaba* (sacred place) with a stone, near East Cape, is called *yobo yaba* ("wind *yaba*") and the stone "gives the easterly wind from Loa. When a canoe goes to Loa, leaves are intentionally put on the stone so that a wind will arise, but these are removed if it gets too strong." Another *yaba* has a stone "connected with a certain sickness and big seas on a part of the reef". In the Mboiwe are "a number of stones connected with rain and wind".<sup>2</sup>

The Melanesians, like the ancient Irish, believed that their standing stones sometimes sent them wrecks or stray canoes.

Instead of wrapping sacred stones with mats, some Melanesians covered them with leaves. Mr. W. E. Armstrong refers to a sacred stone on which the chief god, Wonajō, rested when on his way to his final home on Mount Rossel.

"The stone is called *Ngwabe* and is covered with a huge pile of leaves which have been deposited by passers-by for generations."

Mr. Armstrong tells us in a footnote,<sup>3</sup> that on one occasion when no one was looking he pushed his stick "through about two feet of leaf and mould without encountering the stone at the base".

This leaf-depositing custom resembles the stone-depositing custom of the two extremes of the Old World megalithic area—Britain and Oceania. In some parts

<sup>1</sup> Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 327 and note.

<sup>2</sup> *Rossel Island*, pp. 147 et seq., 152.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143



of the Highlands the custom of piling up stones to erect a cairn is not yet extinct. If a tragedy should occur at a certain spot a heap of stones is soon piled up. The writer on one occasion visited the scene of a murder on the borders of the Counties of Sutherland and Ross and Cromarty. A pedlar had been killed while lying asleep in his tent, and in a few days a cairn came into existence. Every native who visited the spot added a stone to it until it assumed an imposing bulk and height. Another custom he has observed is that of throwing stones into hollows, sometimes for divination purposes, but often for unexplained reasons.

Dr. Codrington records similar customs in Melanesia, writing as follows:

"Though the superstitious regard for stones is so commonly shewn, and the superstitious uses of them are so multifarious, there are yet practices with regard to them in which the natives deny that there is any superstitious or religious meaning and intent, natural as it is that an observer should suppose it. Such is the practice of throwing stones upon a heap by the wayside. Such a heap is to be seen at Valuwa in Saddle Island; each travelling stranger as he arrives casts his stone upon it. The natives declare that their notion is that days accumulate like stones; a man as he adds his stone to the heap 'puts his day upon it'. . . . Another custom common to the Banks' and Solomon Islands is that of throwing sticks, leaves, or stones upon a heap at a place of steep descent, or where a difficult path begins. They 'throw away their fatigue'; they certainly do not acknowledge that they make a prayer or offering."<sup>1</sup>

In the Fiji Group of islands the native word for a divine being is *Kalou*, but it is also used to refer to anything great or marvellous. When Europeans began to frequent the islands, introducing wonderful things that

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, Oxford, 1891, pp. 180 et seq.

moved the natives to wonder and admiration, they were wont to say to a white man: "You are a *Kalou*," or "Your countrymen are gods."

The Rev. Thomas Williams, who was a Wesleyan missionary in Fiji for thirteen years during the middle of last century, knew the natives just at the time when they were beginning to emerge from paganism. "It is remarkable," he wrote,<sup>1</sup> "that the gods of Eastern Polynesia seem to be unknown to the Fijians, in whose polytheistic mythology the objects of worship are divided into two classes:—*Kalou vu*, gods strictly so called, and *Kalou yalo*, deified mortals like the dæmons of classic Greece." He found that the *Kalou vu* were "supposed to be absolutely eternal", but the deified mortals were subject to the ordinary passions, wants, and accidents of humanity, and might even perish. Deified mortals were mainly dead "chiefs, heroes, and friends", but among the *Kalou yalo* were also "monsters and abortions". A living chief was as a rule a divinity. Mr. Williams says in this connexion:

"There is very little difference between a chief of high rank and one of the second order of deities. The former regards himself very much as a god, and is often spoken of as such by his people, and, on some occasions, claims for himself publicly the right of divinity."

Standing stones were regarded as gods or goddesses or were closely associated with them. Mr. Williams writes of these:

"Rude consecrated stones are to be seen near Vuna where offerings of food are sometimes made. Another stands on a reef near Naloe, to which the natives *tama*; and one near Thokova, Na Viti Levu, named Lovekaveka, is regarded as the abode of a

<sup>1</sup> *Fiji and the Fijians*, London, 1858, Vol. I, pp. 215 et seq.



goddess, for whom food is prepared. This (stone) is like a round black milestone, slightly inclined, and having a *liku* tied round the middle.

"The shrine of O Rewau is a large stone which, like the one near Nalua, hates mosquitoes, and keeps them from collecting where he rules; he has also two large stones for his wives, one of whom came from Yandua and the other from Yasawa. . . . Stones are also used to denote the locality of some gods, and the occasional resting place of others.

"On the southern beach of Vanua Levu, a large stone is seen which has fallen upon a smaller one. These, it is said, represent the gods of two towns on that coast fighting, and their quarrel has for years been adopted by those towns."

The chief Fijian god is Ndengei. He seemed to Williams to be "an impersonation of the abstract idea of eternal existence", and of him he writes:

"The serpent—the world-wide symbol of eternity—is his adopted shrine. Some traditions represent him with the head and part of the body of that reptile, the rest of his form being stone. . . . He passes a monotonous existence in a gloomy cavern—the hollow of an inland rock near the north-east end of Viti Levu—evinced no interest in anyone but his attendant, Uto, and giving no signs of life beyond eating, answering his priest, and changing his position from one side to the other."

Although he was the supreme god, Ndengei received less worship than some of his inferiors. His temple was at Rakiraki, but his worshippers did not always "use him well". His mother lay at the bottom of a ditch "in the form of two great stones".

A lesser god was Ndandavanua who emerged "from the centre of a large stone". Ndengei's sister gave birth from her elbow to another god named Rokomoutu, who threatened to devour his mother and friends unless he was acknowledged as a god. Another god was sixty feet



high, and another had wings instead of arms and from him came sparks of fire as he flew through the air. He seized victims in claws on his wings. A god named Kokola had eight arms: one named Matawalu had eight eyes. The deity known as Ra Nambasanga had two bodies, one male and the other female, which were united like the famous "Siamese twins".

These and some other deities appear to be reminiscent of certain Hindu gods. Shiva, for instance, is half male and half female. In one of the Hindu creation myths the first being split himself, one part being male and the other female, and thus gave origin to man and woman. The many-armed deity is plainly Hindu. In Ndengei, half reptile and half stone, we appear to meet with the influence of the Hindu Nāga cult.

Mr. Williams found no idols among the Fijians, but

"They reverence certain stones as shrines of the gods, and regard some clubs with superstitious respect like the Scythians who treated the scymitar as the symbol of their war-god. In addition to these, certain birds, fish, plants and some men are supposed to have deities closely connected with or residing in them."

The sacred stones are numerous in Melanesia, but their uses and attributes vary greatly. Dr. Fox tells of a large bright red stone about two feet square which has been set into the steps of a Christian church. It used to figure prominently in *hera* (burial enclosure) on a *heo*, or raised mound of earth and stones at Heuru in San Cristoval. The stone was connected with the hawk *Bina*, the totem of the Hawk clan, and was called Wabina or Waibina. It was not carved in any way but it was surrounded by carved figures. On its right was a shark in flint, and on its left a flint bonito, and these were taken





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By courtesy of H. F. Tillems, Drogenbosdijk, Holland.

### TOTEM POLES

Carved poles of heavy iron-wood, now rare, placed at entrances to villages in Central Dutch Borneo for protection against all evil influences and calamities. The figures include the dog, crocodile, and tortoise, and, at the top, men and women. This photo was taken after weeks of waiting. It was ultimately found that at 2.15 p.m. the light falls in such a manner as to bring out sharply all the details.



away by a missionary. Other carved figures forming a circle were birds in coral and diorite, including the hawk, the frigate bird, and the sea-gull. Near the stone was a sacred coco-nut supposed to be possessed by Wabina, the nuts of which were never eaten but left lying in a heap.

To the stone of the god Wabina were offered "burnt sacrifices of pig and puddings", especially before war. Ceremonies were performed by the priest.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Fox tells of various other sacred stones.<sup>2</sup> One called the "Shining Stone" lies in a stream. "I am told," he says, "if one goes there by night the stone glows in the water more splendid than the moon at the full." It links with the night-shining jades of China and New Zealand. Probably the myth owes its origin to the far-carried body of jade symbolism.

At Taritari is a large diorite stone called the "Whistling Stone". It is supposed to whistle "whenever one of the clan is to die". In like manner some of the Fomorian (hill giant gods) of Scotland howl when a member of a clan is to die. At Gortlich in Inverness-shire a Fomorian howls when a Fraser is near his end.

A stone called "Umaroa's Stone", is supposed to cover the grave of Umaroa who survived the Universal Deluge, and was leader in a canoe which reached San Cristoval. He carried the sacred stone with him wherever he went.

A "Turtle's Stone" is reputed "to move about freely wherever it likes". Stones of this type are not unknown in Scotland. The writer, when a boy, once sat for some time beside two large stones on a beach, which were supposed to revolve on a certain day in the year, having taken seriously the local belief connected

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, pp. 282 et seq.  
(898)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 285 et seq.  
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with them. The stones were supposed to have been flung across a northern firth by a Fomorian giant. The ghosts of the Marshall Islands were similarly supposed to fling stones, but not great boulders, however.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Fox tells of stones connected with sharks and serpents. A heap of sacred stones is situated on the top of a sacred mountain "where the serpent spirit Hatuibwari came down and created the first pair out of red clay". The people offered to the stones "sacrifices of pudding and fish teeth".

Two large blocks of stone at a bush village were used as seats for chiefs.

Dr. Fox refers to piles of stones. One near a village is said to have been formed by people attending feasts. Each one brought a stone and laid it on the pile.

In Micronesia stones were, as in Melanesia, connected with the gods, the spirits of the dead, and the heavenly bodies. A god called Tabuariki or Tapuariki, who was worshipped by the Gilbert Islanders, was manifested by a lump of coral stone, three feet long and eighteen inches wide, which had been set up on end. Round the stone were tied leaves of the coco-nut palm, and these were changed each month. The offerings made to this stone included the first fruits of the season.<sup>2</sup>

A goddess named Itivini was connected with a small circle of coral stones in the centre of which was placed a coco-nut. When this deity was invoked, fresh leaves were tied round the coco-nut. Itivini was supposed to kill and eat all the children who died.<sup>3</sup>

The Pelew Islanders believed their gods used as seats round stones which had been placed on the tops

<sup>1</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. III, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> H. Hale, *Ethnography and Philology of the United States Exploring Expedition*, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, New York, 1851, Vol. V, p. 86.



of standing stones. Quoting J. Kubary, Sir J. G. Frazer writes:

"One god in Ngabiul has in front of his house a huge square block of basalt, which is regarded as his seat. Formerly, when a man professed to be inspired by the deity, he used to come hither and leap on the stone, without the help of his hands, in proof of the reality of his inspiration. If he succeeded his claim was admitted; he was indeed a god-possessed man."<sup>1</sup>

Sir James, reviewing the Marshall Islands evidence, says that "some of the spirits of the dead are believed to take up their abodes in stones, trees, fish, or birds".<sup>2</sup> Dealing with the island of Yap, in the Carolines, he refers to a stone called a sun (*yal*) in the sacred grove at Olog. In the sacred grove at Maki one stone is a seat for a deity, and another stone is "said to have fallen from heaven and to be neither more or less than one of the Pleiades". The priest performs a ceremony when the constellation of the Pleiades appears, and prays to it. This stone was formerly at Olog, and was carried to Maki by the son of a priest.<sup>3</sup>

As will be gathered from the representative evidence given above, the worship of stones in Melanesia and Micronesia was closely connected with the worship of gods and deified mortals, and also with the worship of trees, serpents, and animals, and the heavenly bodies. There are to be detected certain links with the megalithic lores of other areas in different parts of the world, but the Oceanic complexes have their own particular variations.

The processes of the fusion of cults were not everywhere the same. It seems clear, however, that in the Melanesian and Micronesian areas the introduction or emergence of "stone worship" was not the introduction

<sup>1</sup> *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. III, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9.



or emergence of what has been called "animism". The arbitrary association of stones, trees, animals, reptiles, fish, the heavenly bodies, &c., has to be accounted for. It certainly cannot be accounted for by assuming that we know something about "the working of the human mind" in a certain stage of development. Our knowledge of mind is after all strictly limited; the mind still remains one of the great mysteries of the world.

It is apparent that in dealing with Melanesia certain popular theories regarding what has been called "stone worship" will have to be qualified or revised. "There does not appear," writes Codrington, "to be anywhere in Melanesia a belief in a spirit which animates any natural object, a tree, a waterfall, storm, or rock, so as to be to it what the soul is believed to be to the body of a man. Europeans, it is true, speak of the spirits of the sea, or of the storm, or of the forest; but the native idea which they represent is that ghosts haunt the sea and the forest, having power to raise storms and to strike a traveller with disease, or that supernatural beings, never men, do the same. It may be said, then, that Melanesian religion divides the people into two groups; one, where, with an accompanying belief in spirits never seen, worship is directed to the ghosts of the dead, as in the Solomon Islands; the other, where both ghosts and spirits have an important place, but the spirits have more worship than the ghosts, as is the case in the New Hebrides and the Banks' Islands." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 123.

## CHAPTER VI

### A Temple of Standing Stones

Jumbles of Religious Notions—Early Fijian Christians—Pagan Stones in Christian Buildings—Secret Offerings to Ancestral Gods—The Nanga, an Open-air Temple—Round House and Pyramids—Nanga the "Bed" of Ancestors—Three Degrees of Nanga Secret Society—Selecting Site for Nanga—The Kava Libations—Building of Nanga—Ceremony of Initiating Young Men—Awesome Rites—Initiates as Children—The Sacrament of Food and Water—The Sacred Pig—Women at the Nanga—Offerings of "First Fruits"—Circumcision Ceremony—Making Warriors Invulnerable—Megaliths and Secret Societies—The Nanga and the Polynesian Marae—Culture Drifting—Kava Drinking and Ghost Worship—Round and Oblong Houses—Megalithic Ceremonies in Melanesia and Western Europe.

In pagan times the fusion of religious beliefs and practices was of common occurrence in the South Sea Islands. The "mosaics", or jumbles, of religious notions were not, however, everywhere the same, as has been indicated. Certain tribes gave more prominence to certain imported rites than did others, and the ruling classes, the descendants of intruders who introduced new elements into the religious life, or a section of the mingled stock which in a particular area had effected the conquest of temporary conquerors, perpetuated a body of beliefs and practices which was not shared by the common folk.

When Christianity was first introduced a complete change in mental habits did not immediately take place, although the new faith was fundamentally opposed to paganism from root to branch. There still remained

among many new converts a haunting belief in the efficacy of at least some of the immemorial practices of the older and lower faith and in the natural objects associated with it. As we have seen, the sacred stones of paganism were sometimes carried to Christian buildings and utilized by the missionaries as foundation stones, or to form door-steps so that they might be trod underfoot and thus degraded. But the viewpoint of the native was not quite that of the missionary; to him the utilization for any purpose of the sacred stone in connexion with the new religion brought a certain amount of assurance and satisfaction.

A broad-minded missionary like the Rev. Lorimer Fisson, who laboured for a good many years in Fiji, had no illusions regarding the early conversions. He writes of what he calls "the nominal acceptance of Christianity" by the natives. Although they had outwardly "abandoned heathenism", they continued to practise in secret certain of the ancient rites to which they had been accustomed in pre-Christian times. Mr. Fisson writes in this connexion:

"I use the phrase 'nominal acceptance of Christianity', certainly not in any sense depreciatory of mission work, but simply because it represents the actual fact. The turning of such a (Fijian) tribe from heathenism as a political movement (which was the case with the Wainimala folk) is nothing more than this in the first instance. It is only a certain class of platform orators at home who speak of such a movement as the 'conversion' of an entire people, using the word in its theological sense. Missionaries in the field do not talk like that."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Fisson, who was a capable observer of pagan practices, has recorded much of great value and interest

<sup>1</sup> Lorimer Fisson, *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. XIV, 1885, p. 27 and Note 1.



regarding the "Nanga, or Sacred Enclosure of Wainimala, Fiji", and he tells that after the people formally abandoned heathenism, "offerings were taken on the sly to the Nanga, and the Mission teachers used to keep a sharp look-out for footprints leading in that direction". For a time after the "conversions" evidence could be obtained that "some of the people were still making sacrifices to the ancestral gods".

Mr. Fisson tells us that he endeavoured in vain for years to obtain reliable information regarding the practices connected with the Nanga, but the people either pretended ignorance or refused to tell anything because "they were bound to silence by 'oaths to the dead'".

One day, however, he obtained the confidence of a native by giving him an account of an initiation ceremony practised by certain dusky natives of Australia. As he spoke a woman passed by. Mr. Fisson lowered his voice and said: "Hush! the women must not hear these things."

The native at once concluded that Mr. Fisson was himself an initiate in whom he could have complete confidence, and to whom he could speak freely. Accordingly he "poured out his soul", as Mr. Fisson puts it.

"As he warmed in the narrative, his eyes sparkled, his lips quivered with excitement, his body swayed to and fro, and his arms waved in quick gesticulation such as is never seen among the coast tribes. Unfortunately I had only one interview with him; and though I learned much from him, there are still many things to be sought out."

Mr. Fisson found that the Nanga ceremonies were performed by the Mbaki cult in a belt of country extending from the middle of the west coast of the Fijian island of Viti Levu to the interior, and along a narrower belt from the interior to the southern coast.

A Nanga was a paved and oblong stone enclosure formed by upright stones and divided into three parts by two low walls. Outside it at one end stood a bell-roofed house known as the *Vale tambu* (sacred house or temple). The division next to this temple was the "Sacred Nanga" and in it stood the Kava bowl; the middle division was the "Great Nanga" and the remaining division the "Little Nanga". The Nanga was a sort of open-air temple, and Sir Basil Thomson<sup>1</sup> has compared the structure to "the alignments at Carnac in Brittany and Merivale on Dartmoor". This writer visited several Nangas. He found them lying east and west, and measuring about 100 feet long and 50 feet broad. The upright outer stones varied from 18 inches to 3 feet in height, but did not always touch one another, and "may be described as 'alignments' and other than walls". His description proceeds:

"At the east end are two pyramidal heaps of stones with square sloping sides and flat tops, 5 feet high and 4 feet by 6 feet on the top. The narrow passage between them is the main entrance to the enclosure. Two similar pyramids placed about the middle of the enclosure divide it roughly into two equal parts, with a narrow passage connecting the two. The western portion is the Nanga-tambu-tambu (or Holy of Holies); the eastern the Loma ni Nanga (or Middle Nanga). In the Nangas on the south coast the two truncated pyramids near the entrance are wanting."

It is conjectured by Sir Basil Thomson that the chiefs were buried near the "Holy of Holies" division. Apparently the Nangas differed somewhat in different areas.

Sir Basil notes that the Nanga of the Mbaki cult of Fiji "bears a superficial likeness to the Polynesian Marae". He shows, at the same time, that the Mbaki

<sup>1</sup> *The Fijians*, London, 1908, pp. 147 et seq.



cult was imported oversea from the west. This is suggested by "its dissonance with the Fijian religious system" and confirmed by specific native traditions.<sup>1</sup>

The Nanga was the "bed" of ancestors, and the elders of the cult were the *Lewe ni Nanga tambu-tambu* or, as Mr. Lorimer Fisson explains, "Members of the Sacred Nanga". These were called the *Vērē*, and the very old men were the *Vērē matua* (ripe or old *Vērē*). Next to them in rank were the members known as the *Lewe ni Nanga levu* whose designation was the *Vūnilōlō*. The young men on probation were the *Lewe ni Nanga sewa*. There were thus three degrees in the secret religious cult. No alien could be a *Lewe ni Nanga*.

Now, the Nanga ("bed of Ancestors") had an essential connexion with the worship of ghosts. Its construction was attended by significant religious rites. First of all a village council was held at which reference was made to the fact that the tribe were strangers in a strange land, the ancestors having fled to it in consequence of a great war. It was urged that a Nanga should be constructed in imitation of the one in the original homeland.

Certain old men of the highest Nanga degree acted as the priests, and went out to select an appropriate site at some distance from the village and across a stream. When the site was fixed upon, the headman poured out a libation of kava at the foot of a tree or upon a rock, "and calling upon those who died long, long ago by name, he prayed that the people of the tribe, both old and young, might live before them".

This preliminary ceremony being concluded, the elders returned to the village, and then a number of able-bodied men were sent out to make preparations

<sup>1</sup> Sir Basil Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 147 *et seq.*, and Lorimer Fisson, *op. cit.*, p. 17.



for the construction of the Nanga by clearing the site, collecting stones and marking the outlines of the sacred place round which trees were planted. Then another libation of kava was poured out, and another prayer addressed to the ancestors.

On a certain day cooked food was carried by women to the site of the Nanga and a ceremonial feast partaken of. Then a libation of kava was once more offered and the ancestors prayed to.

Thereafter the work of construction was proceeded with. The men engaged in it lived in temporary huts, and could not, until their duties were fully performed, return to the village where, according to custom, all work was suspended. Ceremonial feasts were partaken of at the site by the elders of the highest degree during the progress of the work. Those who cooked the food had to be sprinkled with water from the sacred kava bowl, the sprinkling being accomplished with a green stalk of kava with the leaves attached to it.

After the Nanga had been constructed, the men returned to the village, and there a ceremony was performed to release them from the taboo under which they had worked. A feast was then held and a priest announced that an interval of two years must elapse before use was made of the Nanga. During the interval everyone must work hard, and everyone must exercise self-denial in eating pork so that there might be many pigs for the feast at the initiation ceremony.

When the time for holding the ceremony drew nigh great quantities of food were accumulated. Men cut out a pathway from the village to the ford of the stream, which had to be crossed to enter the Nanga. The "bed" of the ancestors was so placed apparently because of the belief that ghosts could not cross running water.

The elders and the men of the second degree first visited the Nanga when the proceedings were opened by pouring out a libation of kava and praying to the ancestral spirits.

The young men who were to be initiated were prepared for the ceremony by having their heads and faces shaved. Then rolls of native cloth were wound round their bodies, while a spear was placed in one hand and a club in the other. An elder, grasping his staff of office, which was elaborately carved, then led the young men in single file towards the Nanga. The initiates had to take care to tread in his footsteps.

The young men were led into the Great Nanga where sat those who hold degrees, chanting a song which was intended to imitate the sound of the waves breaking on a distant coral reef. In this division of the holy place the young men deposited their weapons. The rolls of cloth were taken from their bodies by attendants as they slowly and solemnly turned round about. Their weapons and cloth were left as offerings and stored away. Then the young men marched to the temporary houses erected for their accommodation.

Four days of feasting followed, and on the fifth day the young men were again swathed in rolls of cloth and marched out. They carried weapons as before, and followed in the footsteps of an elderly conductor. When they entered the Great Nanga they found it empty. The procession halted, and for a time dead silence prevailed. Mr. Lorimer Fisson proceeds with his description of this part of the ceremony as follows:

"Suddenly, from the forest a harsh scream of many parrots breaks forth, and then a mysterious booming sound which fills the young men's souls with awe. The old Věřě (elder) now moves slowly forward, and leads them for the first time into the *Nanga*



tambutambu (the Sacred Nanga). Here a dreadful spectacle meets their startled gaze.

"Near the outer entrance, with his back to the Temple, sits the chief priest regarding them with a fixed stare; and between him and them lie a row of dead men, covered with blood, their bodies apparently cut open, and their entrails protruding.

"The Vērē steps over them one by one, and the awestruck youths follow him until they stand in a row before the high priest, their 'souls drying up' under his strong glare.

"Suddenly he blurts out a great yell, whereupon the dead men start to their feet, and run down to the river to cleanse themselves from the blood and filth with which they are besmeared.

"These are the Vērē (of the highest degree) with some of the Vūnilōlō matua<sup>1</sup> (of the next degree) who represent the departed ancestors on the occasion, the blood and entrails being those of many pigs which have 'fallen for that night's repast'. The scream of the parrots and the mysterious roaring sound were made by hidden performers, the latter being produced by blowing strongly into a bamboo trumpet, the mouth of which is partially immersed in water."

After the "dead" men come to life again, the young men divest themselves of their weapons and rolls of cloth, which are deposited as further offerings.

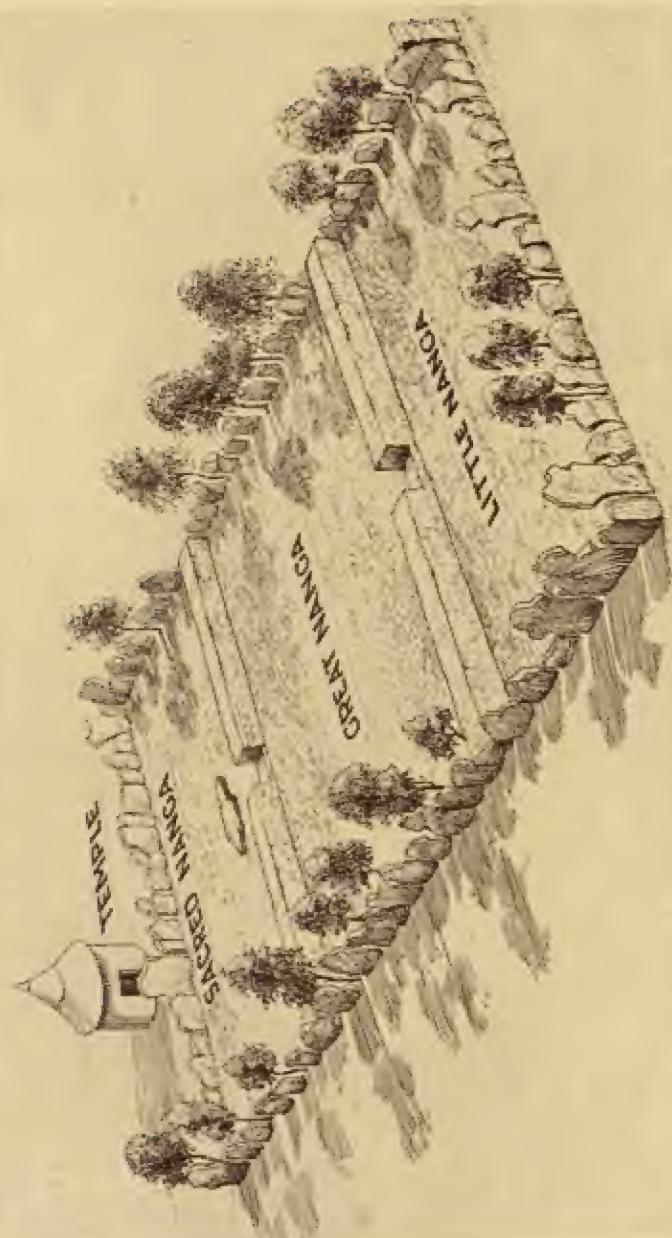
Then the old priest who had glared at the initiates "relaxes the sternness of his demeanour and becomes a remarkably lively old gentleman". Dancing about, he cries out: "Where are the people of my *langa* (enclosure)? Are they gone to *Tongalevu*? Are they gone to *Tumbalevu* (the deep sea)?"

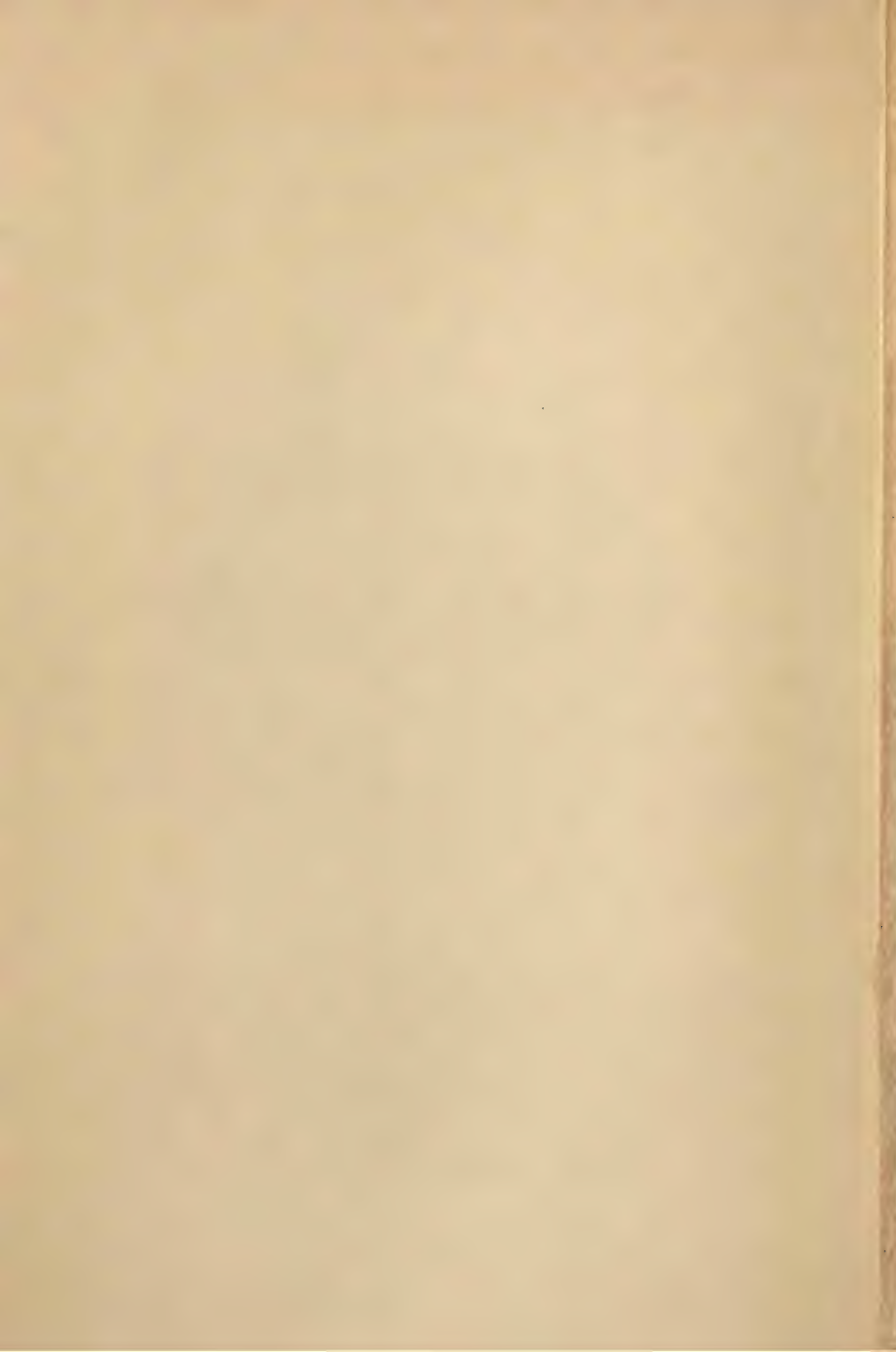
In response to his calls the men who had pretended to be dead, having been cleansed and ornamented, march forward, chanting solemnly, with a rhythmical movement. Mr. Fisson continues:

"They take their places in front of the young men, and silence ensues.

<sup>1</sup> The "ripe" or "old" Vūnilōlō.







"Four of the *Věř matūa* come in, one bearing a cooked yam carefully wrapped in leaves so that no part of it is touched by his hands; the second brings a piece of baked pork, similarly enveloped; the third a drinking cup of coco-nut shell or earthenware filled with water and wrapped round with native cloth; while the fourth carries a napkin of the same material.

"The yam-bearer puts the end of his yam to the mouth of each novice in succession, and they nibble small bits from it; the pork is tasted in like manner; the water follows, the youths merely wetting their lips; and last comes the napkin-bearer, who wipes their mouths. They are now addressed by the chief priest, or one of the very old men, who warns them solemnly against disclosing to the uninitiated any of the mysteries they have seen and heard, and assures them that the vengeance of the gods will most certainly overtake them if they are disobedient."

In the evening the initiates feast on the flesh of a sacred pig. Mr. Lorimer Fisson writes regarding them in a manner which will interest students of the history of Freemasonry:

"They are now *Vilavou*, accepted members of the Nanga, qualified to take their place among the men of the community, though still only on probation. As children—their childhood being indicated by their shaven heads—they were presented to the ancestors, and their acceptance was notified by what (looking at the matter from the natives' standpoint) we might, without irreverence, almost call the *sacrament* of food and water, too sacred even for the elders' hands to touch. This acceptance was acknowledged and confirmed on the part of all the *Lewe ni Nanga* by their gift of food, and it was finally ratified by the presentation of the Sacred Pig. In like manner, on the birth of an infant, its father acknowledges it as legitimate, and otherwise acceptable, by a gift of food; and his kinsfolk formally signify approval and confirmation of his decision on the part of the clan by similar presentations."

On the morning after the initiation ceremony the Nanga is visited by women who have dyed their hair a



reddish colour, and wear waistbelts of hibiscus. They crawl into the Little Nanga, then into the Great Nanga, and then into the Sacred Nanga division. "The chief priest dips his hands in the Sacred Bowl, which is filled with water, and offers a prayer to the ancestral spirits for the mothers of their children." This is called the "hand-washing". It symbolizes the temporary removal of the taboo against women entering the Nanga.

The women crawl out of the Nanga again, their postures being all the time indecent. On emerging the men rush towards them and "very great license prevails". This is supposed to be pleasing to the ancestors.

There is much feasting afterwards, and many offerings are made, including live pigs, which are set apart for the next ceremony. The pigs are regarded as sacred.

Other rites were performed at the Nanga. Members could approach the sacred place to give offerings and pray to the ancestors in times of sickness or any other calamity.

The first fruits of the yam harvest were presented to the ancestors at the Nanga, and the ceremony was accompanied by feasting and public rejoicing. When a man of note was ill, young lads were circumcised and the portions of skin stuck in a cleft stick, and presented at the Nanga to the ancestors, the chief priest making the offering with ceremony.

Sir Basil Thomson tells that "before going on the war-path, warriors used to repair to the Nanga to be made *vunde* (invulnerable)".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. W. H. R. Rivers has interesting things to say about the Nanga ceremonies.<sup>2</sup> He points out that in Polynesia and Micronesia there is a correspondence in

<sup>1</sup> *The Fijians*, pp. 156-7.

<sup>2</sup> *The History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. I, p. 280; Vol. II, pp. 248, 439-40, 435, 456-7.

the distribution of stone monuments and of secret societies, and that there is reason to believe that the *marae* of the Society Islands "were associated with the cult of the sun". The *marae* was oriented in an east-west direction like the Fijian *nanga*.

Connected with some of the *marae* and *nanga* were, as has been stated, structures in the form of truncated pyramids. In Fiji these were at the west end of the *nanga*: in Tahiti they were at the west end of the *marae*. Dr. Rivers writes regarding the two types of sacred structures:

"It seems most unlikely that the *nanga* of Fiji can have been due to any direct Polynesian influence. Tradition points clearly to introduction from the west rather than from the east, and ascribes this introduction to small dark men who certainly cannot have been Polynesians. If native traditions have any value at all, the introduction of the *Nanga* into Fiji is certainly to be ascribed to influence from some other part of Melanesia. Further, it is not among the Tongans or other near neighbours of the Fijians that we meet with the structures most nearly allied to the *Nanga*, but in the remote islands of the Eastern Pacific."

Dr. Rivers concludes that the resemblance between the Polynesian and Melanesian structures is not the result of comparatively recent migrations from the one area to the other, but is "due to an element common to the two cultures which has its roots in a very remote past". He adds that there is no direct evidence to support the view of the Fijian *nanga* cult being connected with a sun cult, but suggests that if the *marae* of Tahiti had a solar significance, the cult of the sun "formed at least one of the motives of the secret mysteries of the Fijian organization".

As we have seen, kava drinking was practised in Fiji as in Polynesia, although the mode of preparation



was different, and the names of the root were also different. Dr. Rivers inquires whether the use of kava passed from Melanesia to Polynesia, or was derived in both areas from a common source. The use of kava was prominent in the *nanga* ceremonies, as it was in the rites of the secret societies of the Banks' Islands. Apparently kava drinking was originally introduced into Melanesia by the cult which worshipped the ghosts of the dead.

Of special interest in this connexion is the round house connected with the Fijian *nanga*. The houses of Samoa are "often round or oval"; and the rounded apse-like ends of oblong houses in the Solomons and parts of Polynesia suggest a fusion of architectural motives derived from the round or rectangular houses. Dr. Rivers, assuming that there have been two elements in the culture of Polynesia, inclines to the view that the rectangular house belongs to the kava people. In Fiji the square house may be the outcome of "a fusion between the round and oblong forms of house". Dr. Rivers thinks that the Fijian round house outside the *nanga* proper may represent "the kind of house which was used by the people of this part of Viti Levu at the time that the Nanga was introduced". One may add that if the round house had been introduced by the kava people, the *nanga* structure should also have been round.

Dr. Rivers gives another possible explanation of the round house. In New Caledonia this form of house was used as a club house, and was associated with chiefs. The ordinary people had square houses. It may be, therefore, that the round house is a relic of an influence additional to the influences already referred to which entered both Melanesia and Polynesia from the outside.

It would be hazardous to press the view that because





20-33

By courtesy of H. F. Tillema, Bloemendaal, Holland.

### BABY IN SWING CRADLE

Central Borneo mother placing baby in swing cradle, on the upper part of which are amulets to give protection against evil and sickness.



the Fijian Nanga bears a superficial resemblance to the alignments of Brittany and England, the rites and religious beliefs of prehistoric Brittany and England closely resembled those of pre-Christian Fiji. The Melanesian religious complexes had a special history connected with the special fusions in Oceania. It does not follow that the religious fusions in ancient Brittany and England were identical. It may be, however, that some of the practices connected with standing stones in the widely-separated areas were somewhat similar. The custom of women visiting megaliths in the British Isles to promote "child getting" may be cited in this connexion. In Fiji, as we have seen, women visited the Nanga and children were prayed for, while the ceremony was accompanied by temporary sexual license. Other linking ceremonies and beliefs are referred to in the previous chapter.



## CHAPTER VII

### Magic-working Stones and Images

Magical Practices on Tanna, New Hebrides—No Stone Idols—Spirits, not Stones, are Served—Uhgen, the Source of Supernatural Power—The giver of Sacred Stones—God-like Powers of Owners of Magic Stones—Stones as Mediums of Power—Nürük Stones—Collection of Stones acquired by Missionary—Powers of the Nürüker—Articles containing "Life Substance"—How Magicians work Spells—Intimidations of Nürükers—Victims take ill and sometimes Die—Stones Inherited from Ancestors—The burning Ceremony in Melanesia—Spells worked by Images in Egypt—Babylonian Customs—The Scottish Image—Magical Images in India—Melanesian Images—Stones bring Sunshine, Rain or Wind—Skulls and Stones—Magical Images in Paleolithic Times—Cave Paintings—Australian Custom.

The magical use of stones connected with spirits, and therefore possessing *mana* (power), is well illustrated by the practices and beliefs of the pre-Christian period on the island of Tanna in the New Hebrides. Great secrecy prevailed in connexion with these, but there were no secret societies. The elderly men spoke of the practices and beliefs to young men after they had reached puberty, and the rites were performed in the chief's house or in any other house. No strange sounds, such as are made by the "bull roarer" were created for the purpose of scaring away women and children.<sup>1</sup>

"One might visit every conceivable place on Tanna," wrote the Rev. William Gray, who had laboured as a missionary there, "and not see stone or stock that he would take to be an idol." The Tannese "have nothing

<sup>1</sup> C. B. Humphreys, *The Southern New Hebrides*, 1926, pp. 72 et seq.

that can rightly be called 'idols'. They have stones that some call 'idols'. But", Mr. Gray reminds us, "our idea of an idol is definite. The so-called 'idol stones' of the Tannese contain spirits. It is these spirits, not the stones, that are served."

Going back with Mr. Gray<sup>1</sup> to the period when native paganism prevailed, we find that the Tannese hold communion with ghosts, fearing those of enemies, and giving food offerings to a departed father who is supposed to make crops grow. After a period the ghosts depart to the Underworld Paradise which is entered through a cave at the north end of the island.

The supreme being known on Tanna is named Uhgen, but is a vague conception. He has a benevolent character, and, like the Babylonian Oannes (Ea), is supposed to have made revelations to man, and to have provided many things for his welfare. He is also the source of supernatural power.

In ancient times Uhgen conferred magical powers upon the ancestors, and certain individuals have inherited the charms from their grandfathers or fathers, which make them effective workers of what is vaguely known as "magic".

When the Tanna natives are asked, for instance, whence they obtain their sacred stones, the answer is "Uhgen gave them to our forefathers long ago". These sacred stones are used for a variety of purposes, and the men who are supposed to be capable of using them are credited with the results produced. When, therefore, a native is asked who "makes" bread-fruit, fish, yams, rain, wind, and sunshine, the answer is "such and such a man". He names the man who works magic.

The stones, which are the mediums through which

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1892, Vol. IV, pp. 645 et seq.



"power" is obtained and exercised, are called *nauve-timin*, which Mr. Gray translates as "lumps". At the same time there are some supernatural powers possessed by individuals "which do not require the aid of 'lumps'".

Among the "lumps" are small stones that can be carried about, or worn as talismans. These give aid or protection to individuals in battle. A charmed piece of wood may be credited with the power of rendering one invisible.

Tabooing does not necessitate the use of "lumps". When food-trees or crops are tabooed, the taboo-breaker is supposed to be subjected to penalties as a matter of course, falling sick, contracting disease, and perhaps dying.

Certain stones influence not only mankind but the forces of Nature. One stone may produce yams, another may bring turtles, others may cause wind, or rain, or sunshine, and so on. The most powerful type of stone is the one called the Nürük, "for it contains the power of life and death".

A white trader on Tanna, while engaged in digging a plot, discovered an old set of Nürük stones and gave them to Mr. Gray. The man who had possessed these magic-working stones had, it appears, died suddenly, leaving no heir. The stones were consequently buried and forgotten. When Mr. Gray obtained possession of them, they must have greatly increased his prestige among the Tannese. "Natives to whom I have shown these stones," he writes, "shudder with terror at beholding them." Mr. Gray describes his set of Nürük stones as follows:

"The large stone is called the body of the Nürük. It resembles a man sitting with his head drooping over his chest, just as a weary man would sit. Its length is 8 inches, and it measures about



11 inches in circumference. It weighs 4 lbs. It is a black recent-volcanic stone of irregular structure, some parts being dense, others almost scoriaceous and embracing little black nodules of denser grain.

"The little stones are called the 'children' of the big stone. 4 is a black stone of fairly close texture, 2 inches long,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches high and 1 inch wide, and sufficiently like a person's foot to be spoken of as *the foot*. 5 and 6 are almost alike, 2 inches long, nearly 3 in circumference, and are recognized as representing members of the human body. 7 is a hard black stone,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, thicker at one end than the other, and is thought to represent the knee-end of the human femur. The four little stones are minor Nürüks, capable of producing continued indisposition, but not death."<sup>1</sup>

A man who possesses and uses these "spirit stones" or "magic stones" is called *yolnuruk*, a *nürüker*. He cannot, however, make use of the stones to influence or injure any person unless he can first obtain something which has been in close touch with him—something which is impregnated with his "life substance". Mr. Gray mentions a stick which has been carried by an individual, remnants he may have left when engaged scraping a stone, or a piece of tobacco.

This idea of "life substance" being contained in certain articles associated with an individual is very widespread. One hears, for instance, in Scotland of a hag picking up a man's lost cap. She rubs it on a stone and, as she does so, the man who has lost the cap suffers pains in his head. When the hag rubs a hole in the cap, the man falls dead.

Saliva was believed to be rich in "life substance". A magic-worker could do evil against the spitter by means of his saliva. That is why men have been seen stamping on ejected saliva even on a heathery moor.

In ancient Egyptian mythology the saliva ejected by

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1892, Vol. IV, p. 653.

the god Re is mixed with dust and a poisonous serpent comes into existence. Nail parings and hair cut from the head are burned by superstitious people because these are supposed to be impregnated with "life substance" and can be utilized by magic-workers against individuals whom they desire to injure or influence in some way or other.

When a magic-worker on Tanna obtained something containing the "life substance" of an individual, he was supposed to be "taking the foot of a person". In other words he tripped him—"knocked the feet from under him". When he was, however, carrying away the substance, he had to take care not to cross fresh water. If he did so, the power went out of the substance. Should one have taken the precaution to wash in fresh water anything possessing "life substance", the *nürüker* would be unable to make any use of it.

Mr. Gray says that the word *nürük* may, in some of its meanings, be translated "refuse". The magic-worker uses the "refuse", containing the "life substance" of an individual as follows:

"He (the *nürüker*) takes certain leaves known to him only, and breaks these very small, and in the same way the 'refuse'. Then all are 'thoroughly mixed', as the cookery book tells us. The *Nürük* stone is now rubbed with this and transferred to a basket just above the fire. The prepared 'refuse' is put in leaves and tied in shape like a roly-poly pudding. The length depends on the duration of the sickness. One end is put in the fire and the *nürüker* watches it day and night. If it is burning too quickly, he withdraws it. He may even take it out for a day or two to give his victim respite or time to go and search for his *Nürük*; for when the *Nürük* is not burning he may recover somewhat. The instant the *Nürük* is all consumed, the victim's sickness proves fatal."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1892, Vol. IV p. 654.



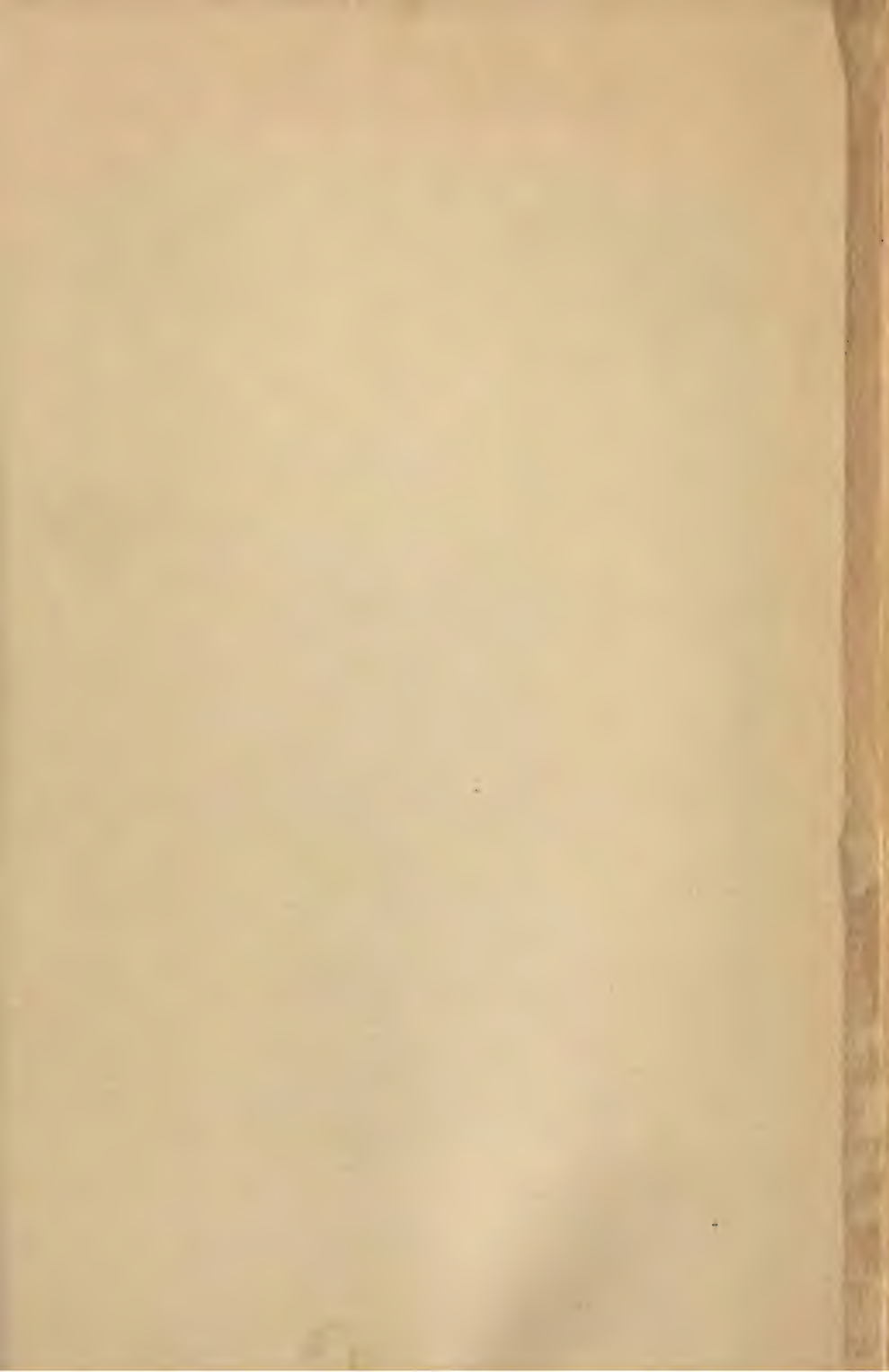
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By courtesy of H. P. Tilmans, Ethnographisch Museum, Holland.

### SCAPE-DOLL

When a Hilian (witch doctor) has been singing, dancing, and reciting charms for hours, a doll made of boiled rice which is supposed to contain the sickness, is placed on a banana leaf and attached to a tree. The patient is supposed to be delivered of the sickness, which has been transferred to the doll.





There are various reasons for taking and using in a magical way the "refuse" containing the "life substance" of an individual. It may be that the nürüker, or the person employing him, wants a person's pig or a gun which has been obtained from a white man, or some other useful article he fancies. The possessor falls sick, or is afflicted by severe pains, and he is compelled to give up the article desired so that the spell may be broken. To effect this water is poured on the nürüker's fire. "A nürük stone," says Mr. Gray, "may produce any form of fatal disease." He says further:

"The coincidence between the burning of Nürük and the state of the victim is astonishing. A man's Nürük is taken and he falls ill; it is recovered, and he recovers. A man falls ill without knowing that his Nürük has been taken; search is made for it; when found, he recovers."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Gray tells us that every nürük stone has a name. Various individuals inherit and use stones for different purposes. "One man is a nürüker, another makes rain, another fish, and so on."

Among the potent stones made use of on Tanna is jade. "Males as well as females," says Mr. Gray, "wear earrings and beads and other ornaments suspended round the neck. Jade is highly prized for this purpose."<sup>2</sup> These ornaments are "luck bringers". There is special virtue in jade which is a "life giver".

The custom of burning the "refuse" containing the "life substance" of an individual is related to the widespread custom of making images of a person who is to be influenced or injured, and placing it on a fire or in running water, or sticking thorns or pins into it.

In ancient Egypt a magic-worker mixed the "refuse"

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1892, Vol. IV, p. 655.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 646.

containing "life substance", such as hair clippings, nail parings, &c., with wax. An image of the individual was then made and either pricked with a knife to cause him pain, set before a fire to bring on a fever, and so on. A similar practice prevailed in Mesopotamia. M. Jastrow gives a hymn which appeals to the fire-god Nusku to thwart the spell of image-making sorcerers:

"Those who have made images of me, reproducing my features,  
Who have taken away my breath, torn my hairs,  
Who have rent my clothes, have hindered my feet from treading  
the dust,  
May the fire-god, the strong one, break their charm."

The fire-god was supposed to defend the worshipper against the magician, and the petitioner recited:

"I turn to thee, I implore thee, I raise my hands to thee, I sink  
down at thy feet,  
Burn the sorcerer and the witch!  
Blast the life of the dreaded sorcerer and the witch."

An accompanying rite was "the burning of an image or of some symbol of the witch or sorcerer", in the firm belief "that the symbolic destruction will be followed," says Jastrow, "by a genuine release from their grasp. . . . The instructions added to the formulas and prayers specify that the image is to be of honey, wax, tallow, pitch, clay, meal, or *binu*, or of cedar wood, or of copper, a different formula being prescribed for each material."<sup>1</sup>

In the Scottish Highlands a magic-worker made a *corp criadh* (clay body) and either placed it beside a stream to waste away or stuck thorns in it to cause pain to the victim. The writer once saw the clay image of a man, stuck with small nails, lying at the corner of a

<sup>1</sup> G. Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique*: "Les Origines", pp. 212 et seq.; M. Jastrow, *Religion in Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 303 et seq.



field. It had been placed there by practical jokers who wished to ascertain if the tenant, an Irishman, was really as scornful of superstitious practices as he pretended to be. As it turned out, the tenant, on catching sight of the image, betrayed much alarm. He removed the nails and then carried off the clay image, but what he did with it is unknown. A subsequent attack of rheumatism was attributed by him to the "enemies" who had placed the image in the field.

Magical images to procure the love of an individual were made in the Scottish Highlands as in India and elsewhere. Father Lambert<sup>1</sup> tells that in New Caledonia in Melanesia images of a husband and wife were enclosed in spindle-shaped bundles, and these were tied together so that they might love one another in life-long union.

The same writer<sup>2</sup> tells that the New Caledonians used stones for a variety of purposes as did the natives of Tanna. They used stones to bring sunshine or rain, to promote success in fishing, to make crops grow, and so on. Before stones were placed underground in a yam-field they were put beside the skulls of ancestors, sprinkled with water and rubbed with the leaves of sacred trees. The stones used for ensuring success at fishing were similarly laid beside skulls wrapped in coloured cloths. Magic-workers chewed leaves and spat them out on the stones, and prayed to the skulls to give them luck at fishing.

As we have seen, green stones were used in Mexico to impart fertility to crop-yielding fields. Image-making was likewise known in pre-Columbian America.

It may well be that the custom of making images to obtain control over the subjects goes back to Palæo-

<sup>1</sup> *Missions Catholiques*, XII, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273.

lithic times. The cave pictures of the Cro-Magnon peoples of the Aurignacian and Magdalenian Epochs in France and Spain may have had a magical significance. Clay images of animals were also made. The view is widely entertained that Palæolithic art owed its development to the magical urge, the ancient hunters believing that they obtained power over an animal by making a drawing of it. In some instances cave pictures of animals are shown with arrow or lance points directed towards vital parts.

Mr. R. R. Marett of the University of Oxford draws attention to the figure of a bison in one of the caves. It is "rearing on its haunches and there is a patch of red paint, like an open wound, just over the region of its heart". Mr. Marett proceeds:

"Let us try to read the riddle. It may well embody a charm that ran somewhat thus: 'With these weapons, and by these encircling tactics, may we slay a fat bison, O ye powers of the dark!'"

He draws attention in this connexion to the custom among the native Australians of making rock-paintings of game animals in connexion with their ceremonies "whereby good hunting is held to be secured".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. R. Marett, *Anthropology*, pp. 51-2.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Swan-maiden Myth

Efate Story of "People of the Sky"—Winged Maidens visit the Earth—The Captured Bride—Her Two Sons—Her return to Sky-world—Feats of her Sons—Wind Controlling—Brothers depart to Sky-world—The Chain of Arrows—Blind Grandmother and Sky Banyan Tree—Another version of Myth—The Sky Rope—Brothers return to Earth with Domesticated Animals and Yams—Tagaro and Qat Stories—Maori versions of Myth—The Celestial Spider's Web—Ta-waki's climb to Sky—His Brother's fall—Sky Mother as Thunder Goddess—God Tane supplants Ta-waki—Ta-waki as Husband of Sky Woman—Myth widespread in Old and New Worlds—Supernatural Folk as givers of Food, Season and Weather controllers and givers of Charms.

On the island of Efate in the New Hebrides, also known as Sandwich Island, we meet with one of the most widespread stories—that of the swan maidens. These mythological beings are known in Efatese mythology as "people of the sky". They are equipped with white wings, or *inlailaita*, literally "thin sails" which they can discard at will, and they are reputed to visit the earth when the tide is out and catch fish. When the dawn is heralded by the bird called *sosoan*, which takes the place of the cock in Asiatic and European stories, they make haste to recover and put on their wings. When they have done so they sing together and a wind rises and causes them to flutter hither and thither, until at length they rise upon it and are blown back to their home in the sky-world.

One night the sky-people came down to the island of Efate, and laying aside their wings began to fish on



the shore. It chanced that a man caught sight of them. He observed where they had laid their wings, and when they had gone some distance along the beach he took possession of a pair of wings and concealed them in the stem of a banana plant.

The fishing went on all night, and when the bird of dawn began to pipe its warning notes, the sky-people came running along the shore to recover their wings, carrying the fish they had caught. All were able to equip themselves for their return flight to the sky-world except the one whose wings had been stolen, and, as it chanced, she was a beautiful young woman. Her companions sang their song, a wind arose and after fluttering hither and thither, they rose in a flock and were blown to the sky.

The wingless maiden was seized by the man who had hidden her wings, and he took her as his wife.

For a time the couple lived happily together, and two boys were born to them. The man wished to give them names, but the sky-woman said: "No, let them name each other." The man consented, and for a time the boys were nameless. But a day came when one of them was in the house and wished to address his brother who was outside. He called out the name Maka Tafaki, and the other responded by calling his brother Karisi Bum. It was thus that the two children of the earth-man and the sky-woman received their names.

Several years went past and then the husband began to dislike his wife and ill-treat her. Sometimes he called her "a wicked woman", and declared she was the cause of all his trouble and grief. "Go back to your own country," he said to her angrily.

The sky-woman sorrowed greatly because of her husband's treatment of her. She began to wish that she

could recover her lost wings, for she longed to return to the sky-world.

One day when she was out with her two sons her wings were found. The boys had seen something very beautiful and bright in a banana stem, and drew forth the wings, which they gave to their mother. Her heart was filled with joy and she resolved to fly away to her own country. Then she told the boys whence she had come and how her wings had been stolen and hidden by their father. She also gave them information regarding her own people, hoping that the boys would eventually meet with them.

Then she put on her wings and sang her magic song. A wind rose and she fluttered backward and forward once or twice. Then she rose in the air like a bird, and flew away very swiftly towards the sky. The boys returned home and told their father what had taken place.

Some years went past and the sky-woman's sons grew up to be very clever and accomplished men. Fortune always favoured them, and they became wealthy and prosperous. Many envied them and would fain drive them away to obtain the riches they possessed. But the brothers were not only envied but feared because they performed marvellous feats. On one occasion they waged war against the demons of the winds. They climbed a high tree and waited with their clubs in their hands to attack the winds.

First came *Suepate* (the trade wind), but he avoided their blows, as did several other winds in turn. But when *Mastan* (the south-west wind) came proudly towards them, they smote him on the forehead with their great clubs, and he shrieked and fell down gasping and faint. That is why the south-west wind always blows



softly and soon dies away, while other winds are loud and blustering.

Although the brothers were rich and powerful, they were not happy, because the people taunted them, reminding them of their origin and regarding them as aliens. They often expressed the wish to depart to their mother's country in the sky.

It chanced that one day they were out with their bows engaged in shooting birds. One arrow soared so high that it reached the sky, and there stuck in the roots of a celestial banyan tree. Another arrow was sent in the same direction and it was transfixed in the shaft of the first arrow. Then the brothers shot a number of arrows, each of which stuck in the shaft of the other, until a chain of transfixed arrows stretched down from the sky to the earth.

One of the brothers grasped the nearest arrow and pulled vigorously, but found it could not be drawn out. The entire chain of arrows was firm and strong. He began to climb up, and the other brother followed, and both reached the sky-world. They grasped the roots of the celestial banyan tree and climbed through them. Then they emerged on a firm and level space where they saw a blind old woman engaged in cooking six yams.

Now, their mother had told the brothers about their grandmother in the sky-world, and they thought that this blind woman might be no other than their grandmother.

Stealing forward softly, making no sound, the brothers took away one of the yams.

The old woman counted the yams by feeling them. When she found she had only five, she said: "Mayhap my daughter's sons have come and taken possession of one of the yams."



She cried out their names: "Maka Tafaki! Karisi Bum!"

The brothers at once responded to their names, and their grandmother welcomed them. Then all their troubles came to an end.

Another version of the story tells that when the mother was about to fly away to the sky-world from her cruel husband, her sons became greatly distressed, weeping bitterly. She, however, comforted them, and told them to watch for a long rope which she would let down from the sky. It was to be tied to the roots of the celestial banyan tree.

The brothers kept watch and one day they saw the rope coming down from the sky. One of them climbed up this rope, and when he had reached the sky he shook it to signify that he was successful and safe. Then the other brother climbed up.

On reaching the sky-world both were welcomed by their blind old grandmother who gave them yams, sugar-cane, and flesh.

The brothers then proposed to cut open the old woman's eyes with the sharp skin of the sugar-cane. This they successfully accomplished, and the grandmother exclaimed: "Oh! my grandchildren you have made me well. I can now see."

After living for a time in the sky-world the brothers resolved to return to the earth. They made a big basket and put into it fowls, pigs, and various kinds of food-plants which grow in the sky-world. Then they lowered the basket.

As they did so the long rope began to swing to and fro. It kept swinging for a time over all the islands beneath. Then the brothers hauled up the basket. When they lowered it again, they took care that it

dropped into a valley between two high mountains. The mountains prevented the basket swinging out to sea.

This valley was called Papalaba. The brothers then descended and they took all the things out of the basket. The brothers took wives and became the ancestors of tribes.

Before the brothers brought foodstuffs from the sky-world there was only one kind of yam on the earth. There are now twenty-seven different kinds of yams. All the fowls and pigs on the earth are descended from those which were brought from the sky-world by the brothers.

On Leper's Island Tagaro<sup>1</sup>, and on Maewo Qat, captures and marries the winged-woman from the sky-world. She is called a Banewonowono (web skin), or Vinmara (dove skin). The "webbed" wings connect her with the bat and the "dove skin" with the dove.

In the Tagaro story the wings are stolen when the maiden, in company of her friends, comes down from the sky to bathe. Tagaro hides the wings at the foot of the main pillar in his house. When he goes back to the place where the sky-maidens had been bathing, he finds that all have vanished except the one whose wings he had taken away. He leads her to his home and she becomes his wife.

One day Tagaro takes her to his garden where she helps in pulling up weeds. The yams are not yet ripe, but each time she chances to touch one it ripens.

Seeing her gathering yams, Tagaro's brothers assume she is taking them before the proper time and scold her roughly. She goes home and sits below the main pillar, weeping bitterly. Her tears fall so profusely that they wash away the earth covering her wings. In

<sup>1</sup> The god Tangaloa of Polynesia.



this manner she discovers the wings, which she at once puts on. Then she flies back to the sky-world.

An Aurora version of the story tells that the sky-maidens came down to bathe in the sea. Qat sees the discarded wings, which resemble those of birds, and taking away a pair he hides them under the main pillar of his house. On returning he finds a solitary young woman weeping, and he deceitfully asks her the cause of her sorrow. "They have taken away my wings," she laments.

He marries her. Qat's mother takes her to work in the garden, and when she touches yams and bananas they ripen. The old woman scolds the young one who returns to her home and weeps at the pillar, discovering her wings as does the young wife in the Tagaro story, and then similarly taking flight to the sky.

Qat had been hunting, and when he returns home and finds that his wife has departed, he scolds his mother. Then he climbs to the top of his house and "shoots an arrow at the sky. The arrow sticks fast and he shoots many arrows skyward. Each is transfixed in the other until a chain of arrows reach down to him." The story concludes:

"Behold there is a banyan root following the arrows, and Qat takes a basket of pig's flesh in his hand and climbs up to heaven to seek his wife. And he finds a person hoeing; and he finds his wife, and takes her back; and he says to the person who is hoeing: 'When you see a banyan root don't disturb it.' But as the two went down by the banyan root, and had not yet reached the ground, that person chopped the root off, and Qat fell down and was killed, and the woman flew back to heaven. That is the end of it."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, pp. 172, 397-8.



This Melanesian story of the brothers, who were sons of a sky-woman, is found embedded in Maori myth. Ta-whaki, who is usually found to represent lightning, and was supposed to have caused the deluge, lived for a period on the earth and suffered at the hands of his relatives. He ascended a mountain to reach the sky-world and met on its peak a female ancestor who was blind. She sat counting ten sweet potatoes, and Ta-whaki took possession of one. On recounting them she grieved to find that one was missing, but Ta-whaki comforted her by making himself known to her. Then he took clay, kneaded it with his saliva, rubbed the mixture on her eyes and restored her sight. He then climbed into a *ti*-tree (*Cordyline*), from the summit of which a spider's web reached to heaven. He climbed up the web. It broke twice, causing him to fall, but on his third attempt he reached the sky.

Another Maori version of the tale gives the grandmother's name as Hine-whai-tiri and that of his mother as Hine-pupu-mai-naua (daughter of the shell). Accompanied by his brother Karihi, Ta-whaki set out to climb the sky. Karihi was beaten back by the wind because he had not chanted an incantation, but Ta-whaki chanted an incantation and climbed a spider's web.

Still another version makes the brothers Ta-whaki and Karihi walk across the sea, chanting incantations. Ta-whaki took as wives many women as he crossed the sea, and his children included great fish. The brothers landed at the foot of a mountain. There they met a blind old woman who was counting and eating food. They took away the tenth portion, smote her eyes and gave her sight.

They asked her: "Where is the road to heaven?" and she made an evasive answer. When, however, they

told her they were going to search for their father in the sky-world, she let down a spider's thread. Karihi climbed up, but after going a certain distance the winds beat on him and he could get no farther. His younger brother Ta-whaki then attempted the climb. He evaded the winds by going sideways, and still climbing upwards, and at length reached the sky-world where he obtained knowledge of incantations.

In another long tale the sky-woman is Whai-tiri (thunder), and she is said to have been an eater of men. She took as her husband a human being who already had a wife. After living with him for a time, she had to return to her home. She then taught the "fellow-wife" incantations and the ceremony which would prevent blight and cause food to be plentiful. After doing so she went away. A cloud came down and rested upon the earth. It "enveloped her and she was taken up to the heavens". She left behind her daughter Hema<sup>1</sup>. In the sky Whai-tiri's voice was afterwards heard as thunder.

Hema had two sons, Ta-whaki (wanderer) and Karihi (sinker of a net). When these two became men they set out to climb to the sky. Ta-whaki succeeded, but Karihi fell and was killed, and his eyes were taken out by Ta-whaki.

Whai-tiri, the grandmother, was blind, and Ta-whaki found her counting *taro*-bulbs and he took away now one bulb and then the other. She cried out that a man was deceiving her. Then Ta-whaki gave her the eyes of Karihi, and she then saw her grandson and she wept over him.

In Maori myth, however, it is Tane and not Ta-whaki who brings down from the sky-world food trees:

<sup>1</sup> In Hawaii Hema is the personification of the south wind.



he saw there the *tui* ("parson bird"). He was certainly a "great provider of food". Like the brothers in the myth of Efate he was a wind controller. "Tane gave orders that the winds should not blow, but he left two winds, which he did not shut up".<sup>1</sup> It may be that in the Tane myths of the Maori are incorporated the myths of the twin brothers of Efate.

Among the many variants of the Maori legend of Ta-whaki, he himself figures as the husband instead of the son or grandson of the sky-woman. She comes down from the sky to visit him, and when she becomes a mother remains for a time on earth. But Ta-whaki breaks a taboo and she returns to the sky. He follows her, climbing a creeper which, like the beanstalk of the famous Jack of the nursery tale, reaches the sky. There he rejoins his wife and lives with her, being worshipped by men as a god.

In his *The Science of Fairy Tales* Mr. E. Sidney Hartland made a collection of the representative swan-maiden stories of the Old and New Worlds. Here the young woman from the sky-world is captured by a man who steals her girdle, her sash, or her mermaid tail, and then by one who takes possession of her wings, her clothing, or feather robe. In some cases there is no mention of supernatural clothing or girdle or wings. Often a prohibition is laid upon the husband, and if he breaks it the celestial lady vanishes. As a rule, however, the story reflects in this connexion the civilization of the people who acquired it and gave it a local "colouring". It also reflects local ideas regarding the Other-world. The maiden may come from the sky-world, from the Underworld, a fountain, a lake or river, or the sea. Instead of a winged woman, she may have a dragon

<sup>1</sup> John White, *The Ancient History of the Maori*, Vol. 1, pp. 55 et seq. and 130 et seq.



form like the French Melusina and the maidens in Indonesian, Japanese, and Chinese stories. In Rarotonga she comes up out of a fountain as a beautiful dragon-maid, although in the New Hebrides and New Zealand she is a sky-maiden as in some Hindu stories. The Nāga (dragon) form of the maiden is, however, also known in India.

When and where the myth had origin it is now difficult to discover. Some would have it that it goes back to the Stone Age. It is not, however, necessary to assume that it does to account for its wide distribution. The concept which gave it origin and favoured its growth and dissemination is that in the Otherworld either in the sky or under the earth, there exists a people with whom human beings may mate, and who are possessed of the cultivated plants, &c., and the domesticated animals which have gradually been acquired from them by the earth-folk. These Otherworld folk are also possessed of charms, and may confer their knowledge and powers on human beings. They are, in short, the supernaturals who control the elements and the seasons, and are the givers of all the necessities of life. The descendants of the mixed marriages were supposed to derive their powers to work magic from their Otherworld kinsmen, and through them were introduced the good things of this life.

## CHAPTER IX

### Origin of Mankind

The Efate Myths—Multiplying Plants—Swinging Ancestor fishes up Islands—The Water-confining Mother—Pottery Myth—Sky split for Light—Separation Myths—How Night and Sleep were Imported—The Pig and Man—Origin of Death—Banks' Islands and New Hebrides Myths—Adventures of Qat—His Stone Mother and his Brothers—Origin of Men and Beasts—Qat and Maui—Qat and Marawa—Pig as Man's Rival—First Human Pair—Tagaro and Suge—Treading out the World—Melanesian and Scottish Folk-lore—Egg Myth of Admiralty Islands—Fijian Egg Myth—Ndengei as Creator—Sugar-cane Myths—Rossel Island Egg Myth—Snake-god and Fair Island Girl—Mountain Shrines of Snake Gods—Fijian Holy Place—A Creatrix—Widespread Well Myth—The Primeval Sea and the Deluge—Imported Myths in Melanesia—The coming of the Cult of the Sun and the Serpent.

We do not find in Melanesia, as in Polynesia, elaborate myths regarding the creation of the world. Indeed, it is only in those islands where the migrations from Indonesia have left a cultural impress due to temporary settlement or intermarriage that we meet with even the idea of a primeval ocean whence the islands of the world arose. In Efate and the islands, known as the Shepherd Group, situated to the north of it, there are stories of the first beings, a grandfather and his grandson, having hauled the islands out of the deep, after attaching a rope to a rock which is still pointed out. The particular rock, however, varies in localities. On Efate a hill on the northern side is said to have been the dry land which first emerged from the primeval ocean. The names of

the first beings are given as Maui-tiki-tiki and Tama-kaia. The Rev. A. W. Murray says of the natives that they "have no idols, but they invoke the spirits of the dead, and worship two gods whom they call Maui-tiki-tiki and Tama-kaia, and to whom they trace the origin of all things. Their Hades, which they say is somewhere in the west, they call Lakinatoto."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Dr. Macdonald<sup>2</sup>, thinks, however, it is a mistake to regard this couple of supernatural beings as "gods". He prefers to regard them as "spirits", or ghosts of ancestors. On Efate he met with only one man who knew anything about the worship of Maui-tiki-tiki; "he said Maui-tiki-tiki's grave is on Mai, and that he had heard of fowls being sacrificed at his grave."

Dr. Macdonald found that the wonder-working beings of the past were referred to either as "Supe" (the ancient one or the ancient ones; the ancestor or the ancestors), or as "Natemate" (ghosts dwelling in Hades after having died in this world).

The Efate form of the myth assumes that at the beginning land was in existence, and on it were dwelling Maui-tiki-tiki and his wife and their grandson Tama-kaia. The grandfather gave food to the youngster, but did not reveal where he obtained it. Tama-kaia was inquisitive and subsequently discovered a secret and enclosed place in which there grew a single banana plant and a single yam. "When the banana bunch was plucked off this plant, another bunch always replaced it, and so with the yam. A yam taken away was immediately replaced by another."

The grandson, after making his discovery, strove with the old man for "the mastery in the world". He

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Murray, *Wonders of the Western Isles*, London, 1874, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1898, Vol. VII, pp. 759 et seq.



muttered words which caused vegetation to increase and flourish. When Maui-tiki-tiki saw plants growing where there had been none before, he began to pull them up. But as he went on, other plants sprang up behind him. Then his grandson accused him of being lazy because he did not wish to have on the island more than one banana plant and one yam.

Maui-tiki-tiki remarked: "You will indeed be master of the world if you can cover the face of the earth with vegetation."

Tama-kaia caused plants to grow everywhere in spite of the destructive actions of his grandfather.

The couple next strove for the mastery of birds and fishes. Tama-kaia won in this contest.

Then the work of drawing up islands from the deep was proceeded with.

Tama-kaia made a great swing, fixing the ropes to the sky. When he sat in it, his grandfather swung him so vigorously that the young man went out of sight across the ocean. He was equipped with a great fishing-line which he cast into the deep, and as he was swung backward and forward, the hook caught submerged land which he hauled up. In this manner he fished up a number of islands.

Maui-tiki-tiki then sat in the swing, but his fishing was a complete failure. He did not haul up a single rock.

In another version of the story there is no sea to begin with. On the primeval dry land the only water in existence was a pool which had been concealed by Maui-tiki-tiki's wife, as he himself had concealed the multiplying banana and yam. The grandmother was in the habit of bathing in this pool. Tama-kaia kept watch on her, and when he found the pool he opened the enclosure.

Then the water rushed forth and covered the world. Apparently this is a vague memory of the Deluge myth. It also suggests the water-confining snake-mother of Babylonia, India, &c.

There is another Efatese version of the myth of the fishing up of the islands of the Melanesian world.

Tama-kaia is represented as going out to sea and observing various lands lying beneath the surface. On his return he asked his grandfather if he could see anything to prove his superiority.

Maui-tiki-tiki said: "No; but if you yourself do, produce it, and you will then be greater than I am."

Tama-kaia said: "Cast your hook and get me a fish."

His grandfather cast his hook and caught a turtle, and when he had cooked it, Tama-kaia ate it.

Then the young man cast his hook, and drew up Tonga out of the depths of the sea. He "founded" Tonga "upon the bones of the turtle"—a touch which reminds us of the Hindu world-supporting tortoise of which the Efatese must have heard.

The island of Epi was next fished up. It towered high into the air until it touched the sky. Tama-kaia knocked it down, "hence the great length of that island".

The young man then asked his grandfather to catch another fish for him. Maui-tiki-tiki caught a whale and cooked it, and it was eaten by his hungry grandson.

Having gained great strength from his big meal, the young man fished up another island, which he supported on the bones of a whale. This island was Efate. It would appear, therefore, that the land in which the grandfather, grandmother, and grandson lived was not the island of Efate, but some other land. Apparently the dimly remembered original myth referred to the



sky-world in which the ancestors dwelt, as did Izanagi and Izanami in Japanese mythology.<sup>1</sup>

That this was so, is confirmed by other references in Efatese mythology. The grandmother, or female Maui-tiki-tiki, is said to dwell in the sky. She may be seen in the moon, accompanied by her grandson. The winged-woman, as we have seen, is also a creature of the sky-world.

When the lands were being drawn up, the grandmother happened to be carrying earthen water-pots, and she dashed these on the land to make it stable. The pots were broken into fragments, and the pieces of old pottery which are now found all over Efate are supposed to be the remnants of her water-pots.

The Rev. Dr. Macdonald writes in this connexion:

"The art of making earthenware pots, which is still preserved in Santo, had been lost by the Efatese before the advent of Europeans. But these fragments of pottery are sometimes called *nabura Ki Supe*, the shells of the water-pots of *Supe*, where *Supe* may denote either *Lei* (female) Maui-tiki-tiki or the ancients or ancestors."

Evidently the fragments of myth like the fragments of pottery on Efate, are relics of a state of civilization from which the natives gradually declined in the course of time.

Other fragments of imported myths regarding the beginning of things are to be met with.

A Mai man told Dr. Macdonald that in the beginning there was no light. Dampness, darkness, and muddiness prevailed. A pioneer, feeling annoyed at this condition of things, took a club and smote at the sky, "the floor of heaven". He swung the club five times without effect. The sixth blow, however, "went home", and the

<sup>1</sup> *My Myths of China and Japan*, p. 352.



sky was split open and the sun and light were then "let in". Here the existence of a sky-world is to be inferred. The firmament is referred to as a "floor".

Another myth tells of the sky being very close to the earth. A woman who raked stones in her oven was annoyed because the end of the pole bumped against the sky. She angrily smote the sky with the pole, bidding it rise up. "The sky immediately began to ascend, and, notwithstanding that she entreated it to stop, it kept on ascending till it reached the position which it now occupies."

This myth is another "fragment". It was evidently derived from the myth of the separation of the sky-father and the earth-mother which is found in elaborate form in Polynesian mythology, and can be traced into India and westward to ancient Egypt.

Another Efatese myth of different character and origin tells of a primeval world in which there was no night. A chief of Meli had two children who cried continuously because they could never get sleep. He, therefore, set out on a journey in quest of Darkness and Night. All round the island he went, visiting various villages and making known what he sought for. In the end he was directed to a jutting promontory called Baulelo.

"Provided with a bamboo vessel, he lay in wait on this promontory, and having seized Night-Darkness and enclosed it securely in his bamboo, started triumphantly on his return journey. Again he called at the various villages; and in return for the hospitality accorded him, and at the end of the meal, sang a song of complete satisfaction, took out from his bamboo a portion of the Night-Darkness and covered the land with it. Then the *Supu*, or ancestral chief, wound up by falling into a sweet sleep."

Like the Ancient Mariner of Coleridge's poem, this ancestral being had evidently reason to exclaim:

"O sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary queen the praise be given!  
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
That slid into my soul."

The Night-Darkness bringer was evidently also the sleep-bringer in an ancient world of eternal light and wakefulness. Perhaps he was originally an imported god.

The pig was deified over a considerable area of the ancient world, and memories of its exalted state survive in various myths and legends. On Efate it was believed that in the beginning there was uncertainty whether man or the pig was to be supreme. There was apparently a period of probation. The pig roamed about day after day caring only for itself, returning by night with its stomach well filled. It took no thought for man, caring not that he was hungry. As it seemed to be extremely selfish and therefore unfit to wield authority, the pig was degraded, and man was given the lordship of the world.

Another matter which was not settled for a time, was whether man should die or be permitted to renew his youth. Some men said: "Let us die," and others said: "Let us be immortal." While the matter was being considered, a being called Pilake announced that he had buried his father and mother. "Beget offspring instead of them," he advised. It was thus that Death and Birth were established in the world.

The being Pilake is represented as a bird, and its name signifies "to be in mortal terror". Another being, Man tangisi nerei, who favoured immortality for human beings, and wept when Death was introduced, is the "bird bewailing man". It sorrows because misery and death are the human lot. If it had had its will at the beginning, man would have renewed his youth like the



serpent which casts its skin and, as was believed, thus got rid of the effects of the wear and tear of time.

According to the Efatese, man dies six times. After passing to Hades he proceeds from life to life there, until he reaches the lowest stage and finally disappears. This Underworld Hades is reached through a cave on the west side of Efate. In addition, there is a sky-world which is reached by the very few. Its memory was kept alive in the swan-maid and other myths.

In the Banks' Islands and the Northern New Hebrides, where spiritual beings are connected with stones, and with snakes, owls, sharks, &c., a prominent place in mythology is occupied by the good-natured and mischief-working Qat. Codrington<sup>1</sup> will not allow him divine rank. He is referred to as *vui* (spirit), but is also spoken of as an ancestor. "When he is said to create," says Codrington, "he is adding only to the furniture of the world in which he was born, where there were already houses and canoes, weapons, ornaments, products of cultivated gardens, and of such arts of life as the natives possessed when they were first visited by Europeans."

Qat's mother was a stone which "burst asunder and brought him forth. . . . He had no father, and he was born on the road. He grew up and talked at once. He asked his mother what his name was, saying that if he had a father or an uncle on his mother's side, one of them would name him; then he gave himself the name of Qat."

Qat had a number of brothers, eleven of whom had Tangaro names: Tangaro the Wise, Tangaro the Fool, and so on. Tangaro is the Tangaloa (Tangaroa) of the Polynesians, and his association with Qat serves to indicate how a sublime deity may degenerate among a

<sup>1</sup> *The Melanesians*, pp. 155 et seq.



people of lower culture than those from whom he has been acquired. The Polynesian Tangaloa is comparable with the Hindu Brahma.<sup>1</sup> Tangaro of the Banks' Islands, and Tagaroa of the New Hebrides are simply spirits like Qat and a little lower than him.

In the village of Alo Serere the stone mother of Qat and his brothers may still be seen. "There," says Codrington, "Qat began to make things—men, pigs, trees, rocks, as the fancy took him. But when he made all sorts of things, he still knew not how to make night, and the daytime was always light."

The myth which tells how night and the gift of sleep were obtained, closely resembles that of Efate.

Qat heard that Night was to be met with at Vava, one of the islands of the Torres Straits. He entered a canoe, taking with him a pig, and sailed thither. He purchased Night from the being known as I Qong. Another version of the myth makes him paddle to the foot of the sky and obtain darkness from the spirit of Night. "Night blackened his eyebrows, and showed him sleep that evening, and taught him in the morning how to make dawn."

When Qat returned to his unsleeping brothers, he took with him a fowl and other birds which would herald the return of light. He taught them to make beds. Then they saw for the first time that the sun was sinking towards the west. They cried out that it was crawling away, and Qat told them it would soon be gone, and darkness would then cover the earth. He released night, and when it was dark his brothers' eyes began to blink. They feared they were going to die, but Qat told them to sleep, explaining that when night was nearly spent the birds would herald the return of day.

<sup>1</sup> *My Myths and Traditions of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 262 et seq.

Qat ushered in the first dawn by cutting the night with a piece of red obsidian. Then the light broke forth and his brothers awoke.

Like Maui of Polynesia, Qat had evidently a divine prototype in an imported mythology which had been degraded into a series of childish "wonder tales". As Qat controls night and day, making the sun sink in the west, so Maui catches the sun in a noose to make day longer. To accomplish this he goes on a voyage, as does Qat when searching for night, and he is similarly aided by his brothers.<sup>1</sup>

A myth tells that Qat was the creator of mankind. He was associated in his work by another *vui* named Marawa who dwelt in the vicinity of a volcano. Qat cut out human images, devoting three days to the task. Then he hid them away for three days, and on the next three days he strove to animate the images. He set them up before him and when he danced they moved a little. By beating a drum he caused them to become more lively.

"Thus he beguiled them into life, so that they could stand of themselves. Then he divided them, setting each male by himself and giving him a female, and he called the two husband and wife. Three women he made and three men."

Marawa made images and buried them for six days, but they rotted, and this was the origin of death among mankind.

The pig figures in this Qat myth as in the myths of Efate. On the island of Mota, according to Codrington,<sup>2</sup> Qat made men and pigs of the same form. His brothers remonstrated with him, and he "beat down the pigs to go on all fours, and made men walk upright."

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology*, Chapter II.

<sup>2</sup> *The Melanesians*, p. 158.



The Mota myth makes Qat shape human beings, not of wood, but of red clay "from the marshy riverside at Vanua Lava". Codrington goes on to say:

"The first woman was Iro Vilgale. Qat took rods and rings of supple twigs and fashioned her as they make the tall hats for the *qatu*, binding on the rings to the rods, and covering all over with the spathes of sago palms: hence her name from *vil* to bind and *gale* to deceive. When all was finished he saw a smile, and then he knew that she was a living woman."

This is quite a satirical touch in the French vein.

Qat has many adventures of the Jack-the-Giant-Killer order, and these were, when related, sources of constant delight to those who listened to the Melanesian story-tellers. His place is taken on Aurora Island, in the northern New Hebrides, by Tagaro; he figures as a *vui* who "wanted everything to be good, and would have no pain or suffering". His companion Suqematua was in all things his opposite, for he wished to "have all things bad".

In Araga (Whitsun or Pentecost Island) Tagaro had ten brothers in addition to Suqe. He was reputed to have come down from the sky-world to make human beings and other things. Suqe belonged to the earth and was "earthy", and Tagaro ultimately consigned him to the Underworld where he was set to rule over the ghosts of the dead.

On Leper's Island Tagaro's opponent is in some places Suqe, and in others as Tagaro-lawua, a big and incapable boaster. When Tagaro made trees which bore sweet fruit, the other made trees which bore bitter fruit. Tagaro made men and said they should walk upright; Suqe wanted them to walk like pigs. All sacred stones are connected with Tagaro.



Tagaro went on the voyage in search of Night which he brought back in a shell. "When he let it out, darkness crept over the sky, men wept and beat their houses."

The Fijian accounts of the beginning of things are not of such detailed character as those of the New Hebrides. There are, however, traces of a common heritage of myths. In Arago, for instance, it is said that Tagaro, when on earth, had a human form, with super-human power. "He made the plain country by treading the ground with his feet; where he did not tread are the hills."<sup>1</sup>

A Fiji myth tells that the god Roko Mouta "formerly took a walk along the coast of Viti Levu; and wherever his train touched, there all irregularities were swept away and sandy beach left. But where he cast his train over his shoulder, the coast remained rocky."<sup>2</sup>

Some would have it that stories of this type are of Papuan origin, but they resemble Scottish giant stories too closely to be thus characterized. It may well be that they are relics of megalithic culture—that they were disseminated by the ancient mariners who erected stone monuments, and introduced beliefs regarding the gigantic people of the sky-world.

In the giant lore of Scotland, for instance, giantesses form islands and hills by transporting in their creels large quantities of rocks. The Ross-shire hill known as "Little Wyvis", for instance, is reputed to have been formed when a creel burst or was upset. Other Scottish hills were formed in one way or another by the gigantic "old wives".

Williams gives the following Fijian matter which links closely with the Scottish giant lore:

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, *The Melanians*, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, London, 1893, p. 250.

"Ndelai Loa, the highest hill on Ono, is said to be the top of Korothau, a mountain in Viti Levu, a hundred and eighty miles distant. Two goddesses, wishing to add to the importance of Ono, stole away the top of this mountain in the night, but, being surprised at day-break, cast down their load about two miles short of the place they intended. In a very similar way the position of two rocks, Landotangane and Landoyalewa, between Ovalau and Moturiki, is accounted for, they having been intended to block up the Moturiki passage."<sup>1</sup>

Supernatural beings made a similar attempt to close the Inverness Firth. They spent a busy night constructing the opposing promontories of Chanonry and Fort George, but daylight came before the work was completed, and the Firth can still be entered through a narrow channel.

The Fijian myth of the origin of mankind resembles that of the Admiralty Islands, where it is told that a dove hatched two eggs. From one egg issued forth a bird and from another a man who became, by union with the dove, the ancestor of human beings.<sup>2</sup>

Williams gives the Fijian myth as follows:

"A small kind of hawk built its nest near the dwelling of Ndengei; and when it had laid two eggs, the god was so pleased with their appearance that he resolved to hatch them himself, and in due time, as the result of his incubation, there were produced two human infants, a boy and a girl. He removed them carefully to the foot of a large *vesi* tree, and placed one on either side of it, where they remained until they had attained to the size of children six years old. The boy then looked round the tree and discovered his companion, to whom he said, 'Ndengei has made us two that we may people the earth'.

"As they became hungry, Ndengei caused bananas, yams, and taro to grow round them. The bananas they tasted and approved, but the yams and taro they could not eat until the god had taught them the use of fire for cooking.

<sup>1</sup> T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, pp. 250-1.

<sup>2</sup> J. Meier, *Anthropos*, II, p. 631.



"In this manner they dwelt, and, becoming man and wife, had a numerous offspring, which, in process of time, peopled the world."

Ndengei, in a different myth, gives life to the inferior animals, but not to man. "Another," says Williams, "represents him as more directly engaged in man's creation, but as having, like Brahma (of India), made several clumsy failures in his first attempts. He was particularly unfortunate in framing the woman; so much so as to provoke the censure of a god named Roko Matu, who happened to meet the first specimen of womanhood, and at whose suggestion she was altered to her present form."

In some parts of Fiji a god named Ove resembles somewhat the Suqe of the New Hebrides, the god opposed to Tagaro. Ove is "a kind of continuous creator", says Williams, "on whom is laid the blame of all monsters and malformations".<sup>1</sup>

Human beings are said to spring from plants in the Solomon Islands. Codrington tells that on Sa'a, for instance, it is told "men sprang spontaneously from a sugar-cane of a particular sort, *tohu nunu*: two knots began to shoot, and the cane below each burst asunder; from one came out a man, and from the other a woman, the parents of mankind."<sup>2</sup>

Ivens, dealing with Sa'a, says that a term *akalo hola*, "creative ghost", is applied in connexion with "the creation of men from the sugar-cane called *tohu nunu*. The chopping of the figure is said to have been due to a creative ghost."<sup>3</sup>

In New Britain the sugar-cane myth is met with also. Two fishermen, To-Kabinana and To-Karvuvu, found

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-2.

<sup>2</sup> *The Melanesians*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-East Solomons*, 1927, p. 183.



in their net a bit of sugar-cane which had been floating in the sea. They threw it away and again netted it. A second time it was thrown away and it was netted once more. Then the men planted it and it took root and grew large. One day the cane burst and a woman emerged from it. She cooked food for the fishermen and returned to the cane in which she concealed herself. After a time, having regularly emerged to act as a cook, she was detected and caught. One of the fishermen took her for his wife, and from this pair all human beings are descended.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, therefore, the two fishermen must have been twin gods.

On Rossel Island, the most easterly of the Louisiade Group, the egg myth is fused with megalithic and snake lore. Mr. W. E. Armstrong<sup>2</sup> tells that "an egg was produced from the union of Mbasi and Kōnjini, and from this egg came the first two human beings". Mbasi is a snake-god and Kōnjini a girl "of fair skin" who had been found on an island. The god Mbasi was himself an alien, having come from Sudest.

The supreme deity of Rossel is Wonajō who resides on the summit of the highest mountain on the island. He takes the form of a snake by day, and is of human form by night. Apparently he was a Nāga—a Hindu serpent deity, for Nāgas thus change their forms, or are found to be half-human and half-snake, that is snakes from the waist downward.

Mr. Armstrong says that before Rossel was formed, its reef enclosed a lagoon on the floor of which lived an immortal race, the chief of which was Wonajō.

"After untold generations, Wonajō made the land within the reef and himself repaired to a new home on Mount Rossel, Ngwō. There he normally resides at the present day."

<sup>1</sup> For authorities see R. B. Dixon, *Oceanic Mythology*, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Rossel Island*, Cambridge, 1928, pp. 126 et seq.

He is also associated with "the mysterious island of Loa at the eastern end of the reef".

Wonajō "expressly invited" Mbasi "from Sudest" to be the progenitor of the human race. He had previously found the fair girl Kōnjini on the island and had wooed her in vain.

Ngwō, the mountain home of Wonajō, is "probably the most important *yaba* on the island". Mr. Armstrong says of it:

"In theory, negligence or sacrilege in connexion with this *yaba* might not only bring the guilty to an untimely end, but might involve the whole island, if not the world, in a general catastrophe." <sup>1</sup>

The sacred mountain home of Wonajō recalls the mountain home of the Fijian Ndengei, also a snake-god, sometimes referred to as half-snake and half-stone, as indicated. Sir Basil Thomson <sup>2</sup> may regard the serpent form of Ndengei as "a modern gloss", but although there may have been a man Ndengei, it is evident that, as the Rossel evidence shows, the mountain-god connected with megaliths and snakes was not, to begin with, merely a deified hero. Perhaps a hero was identified with a pre-existing god.

The sacred place of the snake-god on the Kuvandra mountain in Vitu Levu, was visited in 1886 by Mr. A. B. Brewster, but he found that the deity's shrine was not a cavern, but "three large boulders, two lying together with one on top". Mr. Brewster writes:

"There is a slight crevice between the boulders, and the Fijian word for any cavity, whether a huge cavern or a superficial crack, is *qara*, hence the mistake I and others had fallen into in imagining that the lair of the snake-god was a vast and gloomy cave. The fissure between the boulders faced the north-west, the

<sup>1</sup> *Rossel Island*, Cambridge, 1928, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *The Fijians*, London, 1908, p. 124.



orthodox point of a *thimbathimba*, or jumping-off place for the spirits of the dead, as they started on their flight to the Islands of the Blessed away beyond the sunset."

Mr. Brewster saw a heap of votive offerings in front of the shrine—"old spears, clubs, whales' teeth, and almost every description of native property, but all mouldering, honeycombed and rotten with age". The huge slumbering serpent-god was supposed to cause earthquakes when it moved.<sup>1</sup>

The fair girl of Rossel, who became the bride of Mbasi, the snake-god, and ancestress of the human race, was evidently a self-created mother-goddess.

The Rev. Dr. George Brown has drawn attention to the interesting fact that in New Britain and other Melanesian Groups, "the creator of all things was a woman". She is known in New Britain as Tabui Kor and as Ne Kidong. Dr. Brown writes regarding the latter name:

"Ne is the usual prefix to a woman's name, but I do not know what *kidong* means. *Dongdong* means 'deep' in Duke of York language, and *dong* in New Britain has the meaning to remain in seclusion, but I do not know of any connexion with the name of *Kidong*."

This mother-goddess "made all lands", and the natives prayed to her "when an eclipse of the sun or moon took place". She had two sons, Tilik and Tarai. They lived at Kababiai where there is a sacred spring. The mother made land from this spring, and her sons "worked it".

The sons angered the woman one day, and she went to the well and rolled away a stone. The water at once flowed forth and caused a flood. "This was the origin

<sup>1</sup> A. B. Brewster, *The Hill Tribes of Fiji*, London, 1922, p. 269.



of the sea." The sons afterwards "took pieces of the earth and sprinkled them on the sea and other islands came up. Then they sprinkled this also on the land and trees, and animals and men grew."

The natives never drink the water of this well, nor do they dare to bathe in it. Dr. Brown proceeds:

"They say an immense fish lives in it (the well), which will come when they call it, but it failed to do so when our boys got them to call, though they called long and loudly enough."<sup>1</sup>

The same writer refers to two characters in the mythology of New Britain. One is called To Kabanana. He is supposed to have been "the first man". The other, To Purungo, was the author of evil and spoiled all the works of To Kabanana. As Dr. Brown points out, this pair resembles Tagaro and Suqe of the Northern Hebrides. "Tagaro wanted everything to be good. . . . Suqe would have all things bad."<sup>2</sup>

The myth of the overflowing well, like that of the mountain-removing women already referred to, is found in Scotland. A giantess, known as the Cailleach ("old wife"), was the guardian of a well on a mountain top, and each evening she covered it with a stone. She, however, failed to cover the well one evening and the waters flowed forth and formed a loch. Loch Ness and Loch Awe are among the Scottish lochs said to have been given origin in this way. Similar folk-tales are found in Ireland and on the Continent.

In the Admiralty Islands a myth tells of a primeval sea in which there was a great snake. It wished to have a resting-place and called out: "Let the reef arise." A reef appeared and that was the first dry land.

In British New Guinea a myth tells that a great

<sup>1</sup> George Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, London, 1910, pp. 354, 355.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 354, 355.

flood covered the land and the people took flight to the summit of Tauaga, the highest mountain. The waters rose higher and higher, and when the summit was threatened, Raudalo, "the King of snakes", who resided there, displayed his great power. The myth says:

"Then Raudalo turned him about . . . and put forth his forked tongue, and touched with the tip of it the angry waters which were about to cover him. And on a sudden the sea rose no more, but began to flow down the side of the mountain.

"Still was Raudalo not content, and he pursued the flood down the hill, ever and anon putting forth his forked tongue that there might be no tarrying on the way. Thus went they down the mountain and over the plain country until the sea-shore was reached. And the waters lay in their bed once more and the flood was stayed." <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Dixon says that the association of snakes and eels in the Melanesian tales "strongly suggests the type of deluge myth current in parts of Indonesia".<sup>2</sup> He might have added that in India the fish of Vishnu, a god who has a snake form, is likewise associated with the Deluge myth, and with the creation and re-creation of the world from the waste of waters.

In some of the Melanesian myths the sun and moon have existence at a later period than the origin of human beings and plants. On the Admiralty Islands it is told that after the primeval sea retreated and land appeared, the first two beings planted trees and food plants. The man tossed a mushroom towards the sky and it became the moon, and the woman tossed up a mushroom and it became the sun.<sup>3</sup>

On Rossel Island it is told that the snake-god Wonajō made the clouds, which almost always cover the island,

<sup>1</sup> Authorities quoted by R. B. Dixon, *Oceanic Mythology*, pp. 106, 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Meier in *Anthropos*, II, p. 650.



by throwing into the sky the ashes of his first fire. His intention was to conceal Rossel from "the older island of Sudest". Wonajō created the stars, but not the sun and the moon.

Mbasi, the snake-god, came from Sudest in a sailing-canoe, "bringing with him the sun and the moon, the pig, the dog, and the taro". The pig was placed on the north side of the island, and the dog on the south side—a memory, apparently, of the animal guardians of the cardinal points.

The sun and moon were living beings, and for a time remained on the island.

"Later the sun and moon went to bathe, the sun choosing the warm salt water, the moon the cold creek water, and then they ascended into the sky. But the sun found the moon too cold, and the moon found the sun too hot. Wonajō, therefore, arranged for them to traverse the sky at different times, the sun by day and the moon by night. Moreover, finding that the moon, the sun, and the sky, were too close to the earth, he raised the whole heavens to their present height with a long pole."

Mr. Armstrong says there are obscurities in the Rossel myth of the sun and moon. There is, however, in some versions given him a suggestion of "a connexion between the sun and the hatching of the egg" whence issued the first man and woman. "One informant," he adds, "suggested that the sun had connexion with Kōnjini."<sup>1</sup>

It may be that in the story of Wonajō, the snake-god, who carries the sun and moon in his canoe from Sudest to Rossel, there is a memory of the importation by strangers of the cult of the sun and the serpent, and, in addition, a great deal of lore connected with megaliths, giants, giantesses, water-confiners, &c.

<sup>1</sup> W. E. Armstrong, *Rossel Island*, 1928, pp. 126-8.



Dixon quotes from Hagen <sup>1</sup> a folk-tale from German New Guinea in which we find blended the myth of the waters confined in a well, and the myth of the origin upon the earth of the moon. An old woman kept the moon hidden in a jar. "Some boys discovered this, and coming secretly, opened the jar, whereupon the moon flew out; and though they tried to hold it, it slipped from their grasp and rose into the sky, bearing the marks of their hands on its surface."

<sup>1</sup> *Unter der Papuan*, Wiesbaden, 1899, and *Oceanic Mythology*, p. 112.

## CHAPTER X

### The Quest of Paradise

Fijian Paradise—Journey of Ghost—Doomed Bachelors—Fijian Charon—Punishment of Offenders—Cannibal Gods—The Two Souls—Immortality not limited as in Tonga—Spirit Land of New Britain—Question of Punishment—The Land-Under-Sea in New Caledonia—Paradise of Eternal Sunshine and Youth—Journey of Ghost in New Hebrides—The Ghost-devouring Pig—Punishment of Wicked—Paradise of Efate—Sara and his Officers—A Tribal Test—A Dog for Hades—The Six Deaths—Chief who visited Hades—Re-animation of Dead—Paradise of Panoï and Banoï—More visits to Hades—Canoe of Dead in the Solomons—The "Brig o' Dread"—Ear and Nose boring Necessary—The Micronesian Hag and Ghosts—Ghosts walk over Sea—The Necessary Tattoo Marks—Judgment of Dead—Marshall Islands Paradise—An "Isle of the Blest"—Ghost in Canoe Form—Canoe of Dead in Pelew Islands—Paradise and Hell of Marianne Islands—Paradise and Hell of Ponape—Sky-world Paradise of Yap and Mortlock Islands—A New Guinea Paradise—Land of Eternal Youth—The Dead judged and Wicked punished—Hindu Celestial River—San Cristoval Celestial River—The "Winged Serpent" or Dragon God—Hindu Nāgas—White Ghosts and Dark Ghosts—The Two Souls—Stone Users and Cult of the Sun.

The belief in a future state of existence, which is widespread in Melanesia, has exercised a profound influence on the mentality of the natives.

In Fiji the Rev. Thomas Williams<sup>1</sup>, the Australian Wesleyan missionary, was struck by "the apparent indifference of the people about death", which some regarded as a state of "simple rest" as set forth in one of their rhymes:

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, London, 1858, pp. 243 et seq.

" A mate na rawarawa:  
Me bula—na ka ni cava?  
A mate na cegu."

" Death is easy:  
Of what use is life?  
To die is rest."

The general opinion was that the future world is to be " much the same as the present ", and that there would be no moral retribution " in the shape either of reward or punishment ". Both the good and the bad were expected to meet in the Paradise of the Otherworld, the abode of departed spirits called Mbulu or Mbulotu, the Pulotu of the Samoans and the Tongans.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Williams found, however, that although the Fijian people talked about going to Mbulu with as little concern as if they proposed to go bathing, the path was beset by many perils, and the arrival there " a precarious contingency ".

When a Fijian was buried, the mourners placed in his right hand a whale's tooth, and his ghost was supposed to carry the spirit of it when he set out on his journey to Mbulu. The ghost first climbed a hill and waited there for the ghost of his strangled wife. If she did not arrive he lamented: " How is this? For a long time I planted food for my wife, and it was also of great use to her friends: why, then, is she not allowed to follow me? Do my friends love me no better than this, after so many years of toil? Will no one, in love to me, strangle my wife?" <sup>2</sup>

There was little hope for bachelors of a future state of bliss. A hag, called the " Great Woman ", lurked by the side of the path to clutch the unmarried man. If he

<sup>1</sup> *My Myths of the South Sea Islands*, p. 262.    <sup>2</sup> T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, pp. 243-4.



chanced to elude her, the demon Nangganangga, who hated all bachelors, and kept an untiring watch, was sure to seize him. When the tide was full there was no possibility of getting past the large black stone on which he sat. The bachelor's ghost accordingly waited for low water, and then tried to steal round to the edge of the reef in the hope that the Charon of that area would ferry him across. The demon laughed as he saw a ghost endeavouring to elude him. "Do you think," he called out, "the tide will never rise again?"

In the end the tide rises and the ghost is driven up the beach where he is seized by the demon, and dashed to pieces against the large black stone.

The ghost of the married man is allowed to pass onward. A paroquet heralds his approach, and he is taken on board the Fijian Charon's canoe. A dread water is crossed, and then the ghost proceeds to a town where the spirit is tested.

The examiner is not a ghost but a living man. Before 1847 this individual was Samu, and he was succeeded by his son Samuyalo, the "Killer of Souls". Mr. Williams proceeds:

"On hearing the paroquet, Samu and his brothers hide themselves in some spiritual mangrove bushes, just beyond the town, and alongside of the path, in which they stick a reed as a prohibition to the spirit to pass that way. Should the comer be courageous, he raises his club in defiance of the *tabu* and those who placed it there; whereupon Samu appears to give him battle, first asking, 'Who are you, and whence do you come?'

"As many carry their inveterate habit of lying into another world, they make themselves out to be of vast importance, and to such Samu gives the lie, and fells them to the ground.

"Should the ghost conquer in the combat, he passes on to the judgment seat of Ndengei; but if wounded, he is disqualified for

appearing there and is doomed to wander among the mountains. If he be killed in the encounter, he is cooked and eaten by Samu and his brethren."<sup>1</sup>

The ghost who escapes Samu wanders on to one of the high peaks of the Kuvandra mountains. Here the path to Paradise "ends abruptly at the brink of a precipice, the base of which is said to be washed by a deep lake".

On the precipice a steer-oar projects, and it is in charge of the snake-god, Ndengei, or of an old man and his son who carry out the commands of the god. The ghost is questioned:

"Under what circumstances do you come to us? How did you conduct yourself in the other world?"

It is well for the ghost if he can say: "I am a great chief. I lived as a chief, and my conduct was that of a chief. I had great wealth, many wives, and ruled over a powerful people. I have destroyed many towns, and slain many in war."

On hearing an utterance of that kind, the guardians of the oar say: "Good, good! Take a seat on the broad part of this oar, and refresh yourself in the cool breeze."

Mr. Williams proceeds:

"No sooner is he seated than they lift the handle of the oar, which lies inland, and he is thus thrown down headlong into the deep waters below, through which he passes to Murimuria. Such as have gained the special favour of Ndengei are warned not to go out on the oar, but to sit near those who hold it, and, after a short repose, are sent back to the place whence they came to be deified."<sup>2</sup>

It appears that Murimuria is an area of inferior happiness in the Paradise of Mbulu. There are different

<sup>1</sup> T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, pp. 245-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 246-7.



divisions of Mbulu where punishment or bliss is awarded, "but not for an offence or for merit of a moral kind".

The Fijian Paradise is described in glowing language. "Scented groves and pleasant glades, smiled upon by an unclouded sky, form the retreat of those who dwell in this blest region, where there is an abundance of all that a native deems most to be desired".

Mr. Williams heard the Paradise of Bliss in the Otherworld referred to as Mburotu (Mbulotu), and says: "the word is used proverbially to describe any uncommon joy". He gives further details regarding the Otherworld:

"In most parts of Mbulu the inhabitants plant, live in families, fight, and, in short, do much as people in this world. They are said, however, to be larger than when on earth. Mention is made in native traditions of first, second, and third heavens; but the terms do not appear to convey any definite idea.

"Various punishments are inflicted upon those who have not lived so as to please the gods. Some are laid in rows on their faces, and converted into taro beds. Those who have not had their ears bored are doomed to carry for ever on their shoulders the log of wood on which cloth is beaten, jeered at by all who see them. Women that are not tattooed are chased by their own sex, who tear and cut them with sharp shells, giving them no respite; or they are scraped up and made into bread for the gods. Men who have not slain an enemy are sentenced to beat a heap of filth with a club, because they used that weapon so badly while in the body. A native regards this as the most degrading of all punishments. It thus appears that, although the Fijians allow a spirit to almost everything, they dispose of them in such a way that few attain to immortality."<sup>1</sup>

Like their worshippers, the Fijian gods were cannibals. They consumed the spirits of all meats and drinks offered to them, and they also ate the spirits of men who were

<sup>1</sup> T. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 247.



consumed by cannibals upon the earth. Mr. Williams found that some believed in the eventual annihilation of souls; others had superstitions which bordered upon transmigration.

The Areois of Polynesia believed in a Paradise similar to that of Mbulotu—the perfumed Rohutu situated near a lofty mountain. There the souls “were”, as Ellis tells, “supposed to be employed in a succession of amusements and indulgences similar to those to which they had been addicted on earth”.<sup>1</sup>

It has to be borne in mind, however, that although the Fijians believed in soul-destroying and soul-eating and in a Paradise for souls, they conceived that each human being had two souls, one dark and one light. It was the dark soul which travelled towards Paradise. The light soul remained near the spot where death had taken place. The light soul could assume human form at will. It was the reflection which could be seen in clear water, while the dark soul was the shadow. Mr. Williams writes in this connexion:

“I once placed a good-looking native suddenly before a mirror. He stood delighted. ‘Now,’ said he softly, ‘I can see into the world of spirits.’”<sup>2</sup>

The Fijians, like the ancient Babylonians and the Aztecs of Mexico, were very much afraid of the spirits of women who had died in childbed. They also feared the spirits of slain men and unchaste women.

William Mariner<sup>3</sup> found there was a marked difference between the Tongan (Polynesian) and Fijian ideas regarding the fate of souls. The Tongan doctrine limited immortality to chiefs, *matabooles* (the next rank

<sup>1</sup> *My Myths of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 341-2.

<sup>2</sup> T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> An account of the natives of the Tonga Islands, London, 1818 (Second Edition), II, pp. 129 et seq.

to chiefs) and *mooas* (the third rank), while the Fijians extended immortality not only to all mankind, but to all brute animals, to all vegetables, stones, and mineral substances. Mariner writes:

"If an animal or plant die, its soul immediately goes to Bolotoo (Mbulotu); if a stone or any other substance is broken, immortality is equally its reward; nay, artificial bodies have equal good luck with men, and hogs, and yams. If an axe or a chisel is worn out or broken up, away flies its soul for the service of the gods. If a house is taken down, or any way destroyed, its immortal part will find a situation on the plains of Bolotoo; and, to confirm this doctrine, the Fiji people can show you a sort of natural well, or deep hole in the ground, at one of their islands, across the bottom of which runs a stream of water, in which you may clearly perceive the souls of men and women, beasts and plants, of stocks and stones, canoes and houses, and of all the broken utensils of this frail world, swimming or rather tumbling along one over the other pell-mell into the regions of immortality.

"Such is the Fijian philosophy, but the Tonga people deny it, unwilling to think that the residence of the gods should be encumbered with so much useless rubbish. The natives of Otaheite (Tahiti) entertain similar notions respecting these things, viz. that brutes, plants and stones exist hereafter, but it is not mentioned that they extend the idea to objects of human invention."

Dr. George Brown found that in New Britain the people believed that when a man died his ghost went to the spirit-land. There he met former friends, but if they did not want him at that time, they drove him away, and he returned to life again. "This also," adds Dr. Brown, "is the explanation which they give when a man recovers from a faint or unconsciousness of any kind." Regarding the Otherworld he writes:

"The spirit-land is a very real locality, and, as in other places, there is always one place from which the spirit takes its departure



to it. On Duke of York this place is located on a small island called Nuruan, near Mioko. So far as I know, the place of departure is always in the west, but in New Britain they do not recognize any connexion between that and sunset; in fact, they have no name for the west, nor have I heard any myth associating the departure of a spirit with the sun and returning to earth. This spirit land is far away, but in no particular direction; in fact, all their ideas about it are very hazy indeed. Life in the next world, they say, is very much as it is here; to some it is a very dismal and unsatisfactory place, whilst to others it is very beautiful." <sup>1</sup>

In another account of New Britain beliefs, which vary in different areas, Dr. Brown tells that the differences of the treatment of the dead in the spirit-world depended mainly on their rank in this life. "The spirits of the common people were supposed to stay about the caves and holes in the rocks and to eat rubbish." Warrior-chiefs, and particularly those who had been generous men, "went to a good place and were well fed". Dr. Brown adds:

"The only definite punishment I ever heard of was in the case of a niggard, and the punishment of such a man, they told me, was that the spirits took him and bumped him against the big slab roots of the chestnut tree." <sup>2</sup>

When we come south again we find that in New Caledonia the land of souls, called Tsiabiloum, is supposed to be situated at the bottom of the sea. It is a land of great beauty and plenty, but is difficult to reach. On a rock of Pott Island sits Kiemoua, who catches ghosts in his net, and having dealt fiercely with them, allows them to pass on.

After reaching Tsiabiloum the ghosts live in eternal sunlight, for night never comes on, and there is no

<sup>1</sup> *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 194-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. VII, p. 789.



desire for sleep. There is no sickness there, nor sorrow, and no decrepitude. It is a land of eternal youth and good health. No one even feels dull. A favourite recreation is a game played with oranges. Each ghost procures an orange and never parts with it. One can tell by the colour of the orange how long the ghost has been in the land of bliss. If it is green, the possessor is a recent arrival, if it is yellow the ghost has been in Paradise for some time, and if it is dry and hard, the ghost must have arrived a long time back.

These care-free ghosts pay visits to the world of men, arriving at daybreak at the graveyards of home, and departing when night is coming on. Apparently it is necessary that they should re-visit their former haunts because their kinsmen pray to ghosts for food and adore the skulls of ancestors.<sup>1</sup>

Passing to the New Hebrides, we find that, according to the evidence of an educated native of Aurora, the ghost on leaving the body mounts a tree and makes fun of the mourners. "What are they crying for?" he says; "who is it they are sorry for? Here am I!"

The ghost afterwards runs through the gardens, making for the hills until the end of the island is reached. There he sees the *vat dadoma*, "stone of thought", and if he remembers the loved ones left behind, he runs back and re-enters the body. If, however, he leaps across a certain ravine, he cannot return. He then goes on to the point of the island opposite to Raga, Pentecost, and on the sea-edge meets with the ghosts who had departed this life before him.

There are, however, perils to be encountered. If he has slain or injured former acquaintances, the ghosts of these individuals attack him. At the northern point of

<sup>1</sup> Le Père Lambert, *Mœurs et Superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens*, pp. 13-16.

Maewo a chasm must be leaped, and if the ghost stumbles or fails to leap clear, it may be shivered in pieces.

On the hill of Tawu is a hollow which is reputed to be the entrance to the Paradise of Banoi. There armed spirits await to stab newcomers with their spears. But most to be feared of all is a demon—"a huge fierce pig" which devours "all who have not in their lifetime planted the *emba*, pandanus, from which masts are made". Codrington translates the scholarly native's narrative as follows:

"If one has planted such, he can climb up out of the reach of the devouring beast, and for this reason everyone likes to plant that tree.

"Here also, if a man's ears are not pierced, he is not allowed to drink water; if he is not tattooed, he must not eat good food."<sup>1</sup>

Codrington tells that when a crowd of ghosts is waiting at the entrance to the Otherworld, they can be heard by living people either making merry at play or wailing with grief and pain. The ghosts who reach Banoi, are supposed to be black, and in that land some are compelled to eat foul food. The trees there have red leaves, and all the birds are red.

Another account of Banoi from Araga, Pentecost Island, represents it as a town. It is reached from a ghost-gathering place, a point of land opposite Ambrym. There stands a tree from which ghosts leap into the sea, and "a shark waiting below bites off the noses of those who have not killed pigs in accordance with the customs of the island".

In the town of Banoi there are "houses, trees, sweet-smelling plants and shrubs with coloured leaves, but no gardens because there is no work. The newcomer is

<sup>1</sup> *The Melaneseans*, p. 280.



weak at first and rests before he begins to move about the place". Some ghosts are welcomed; others who have committed murders are set apart and not allowed to join the company of happy ghosts.

As is the case elsewhere, the ghosts are supposed to revisit former haunts and their burial places. When seen, they resemble fire.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting account of Efatese beliefs and customs is given by the Rev. D. Macdonald, the Australian missionary<sup>2</sup>. He says that the spirit-world, named *Abokas*, is "down under the surface of the earth and beneath the sea". The entrance to it in Efate is at the western side of the island. When a man dies his ghost climbs a tree close to the sandy beach on which there is always a heavy, thundering swell. He shouts to a spirit who immediately rises from the sea; and simultaneously a wave leaps up and carries off the ghost. Dr. Macdonald goes on to say:

"At the entrance gate of Hades a tremendous being named Sara<sup>3</sup>, or Sara-tau, has to be passed; with him are four officers, Vaus, Maaki, Maseirut, and Maseasi.

"Vaus asks as to the new comer, 'Who?'

"If Maaki answers, 'I don't know,' Maseirut clasps him round and holds him, while Sara cleaves his forehead and twists his head backside foremost, and Maseasi gouges out his tongue from the root.

"If Maaki says, 'He is one of ours,' Sara lets him pass untouched.

"Even here the Nakainaga<sup>4</sup> comes into play; Sara is said to be of the *Nakainaga namkat* (a kind of yam) and to allow any of that *Nakainaga* to pass unharmed. People of the *Nakainagas* put a fillet of *namkat* leaves round their heads to deceive him; but he

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Sydney, N.S.W., 1893. Vol. IV, pp. 720 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> Pronounced *Sa-ra*.

<sup>4</sup> Tribe. The *Nakainaga nani* is the Yam tribe.



discerns their hypocrisy from the withered aspect of the leaves. Some of the *Nakainagas* pass him unharmed by stripping off from their bodies tattoo marks and presenting them to him; these marks were sometimes cut into their flesh in mourning for the dead, and sometimes in the worship of a being called Wote<sup>1</sup>, as it seems—certainly in the former case.

“Another curious practice was, at the death of a chief, to kill a dog, which dog was to accompany him and ‘*koba Sara*’, that is, to drive away Sara, so that his master might pass unharmed into Hades.”

Dr. Macdonald found that on Efate *Abokas*, Hades, was regarded as a dark, gloomy, and sad place. In the middle of it is a stagnant pool or marsh called Ra-les, “gloomy place, or lake”.

“Everything is shadowy and unreal in that fearsome place. When the *natemate*<sup>2</sup> makes an oven and cooks food, on opening the oven nothing but dirt is found in it. A story is told of a man who died and went there; his wife also died, and when he saw her in Hades, he attempted to embrace her, but he became mere dust on her bosom, and failed in the attempt. One is reminded of Virgil's words, though spoken not of attempted embraces, but of an attempted war cry in Hades,

“*Inceptus clamor frustratur hiantes.*”

There are several stages in Hades, one below the other, and a man dies six times. Those for whom animals have been sacrificed fare well, but those worthless individuals who have received no such consideration suffer from wild hunger. In the lower stages of the Efatese Hades a ghost assumes the form of a rat or a snake. “Finally he disappears from Magatika (the lowest stage) like the down of a certain plant carried away through the air, or a puff of white vapour lost in the

<sup>1</sup> *Wo-te*.

<sup>2</sup> A ghost or a spirit of unknown origin.

atmosphere, or the husk of a certain fruit floating away out to sea."

In a later account of the myths of the Efatese, Dr. Macdonald gives the following narrative which reveals a belief in partial reanimation even after the sixth death.

"A chief of Bau was making an *intamate* (heathen feast), and searched for Nabuma Nakabu to be his *aure* (singer or bard) at it.

"They told him that Nabuma Nakabu had gone to Tukituki, the west point of Efate, where is the entrance to Hades.

"He (the chief) went to Tukituki and was told that Nabuma Nakabu had died, and been buried, and gone to Bokas. He went down to Bokas (the first stage of the Underworld), and was told that Nabuma Nakabu had died, and been buried there, and gone to Magapopo (next lower stage of Hades). He went down to Magapopo, and was told that Nabuma Nakabu had died, and been buried there, and gone to Magaferafera. He went down to Magaferafera and was told that Nabuma Nakabu had died, and been buried there, and had gone to Maganaponapo. He went down to Maganaponapo and was told that Nabuma Nakabu had died, and been buried there and had gone to Matika (the lowest stage of the Underworld). He went down to Matika and inquired for Nabuma Nakabu, and they said to him, 'Behold, there are his bones at the foot of a *nalas* (a dark-leaved plant). He (the chief) went and gathered his bones into a basket, and, reascending into the world carried them to Bau to the *Mulel* (the *napea*, or dancing and singing ground of the *intamate*).

The drums were beaten, and as the (to Efatese ears) inspiring, measured sounds thundered forth, the bones of Nabuma Nakabu heaped together in the basket, burst forth into singing!"<sup>1</sup>

Throughout eastern Melanesia from the Torres Island to Pentecost in the New Hebrides, the Underworld is called Panoi or Banoi, and it is reached through

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science, Sydney, 1898, Vol. VII, p. 765.*



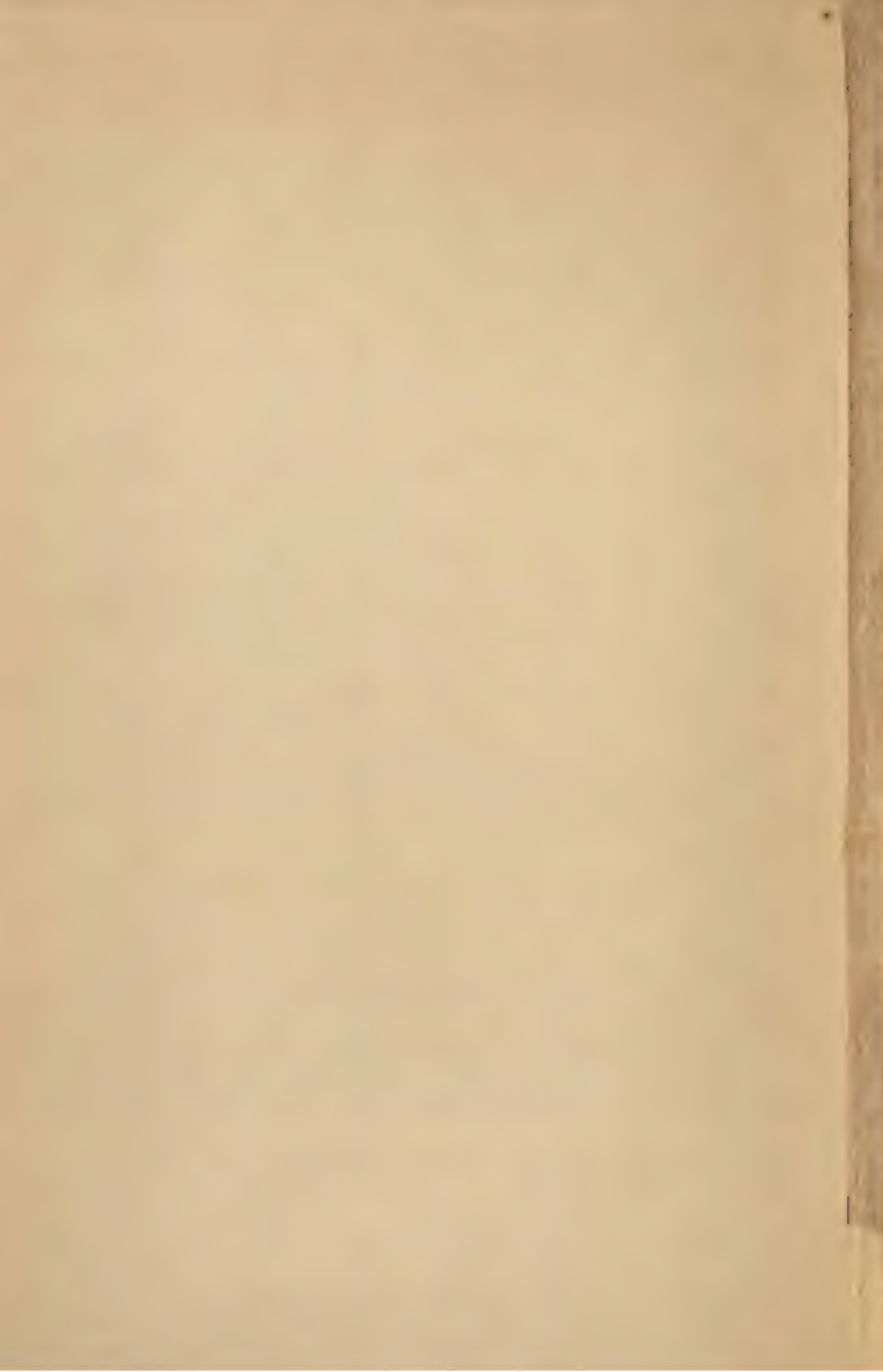
hollows or caves or the vent of a volcano. On the Banks' Islands it is believed that the ghost hovers near the corpse for a few days, and makes known its presence by noises in the house and lights on the grave. On some islands the ghost has to be ceremonially driven away. Then it makes its way to Panoi which has many entrances. Codrington found it difficult to obtain precise and consistent accounts of the condition of ghosts in Panoi. But everywhere the people believed that there were points of land on which ghosts congregated before their final departure. There they could be heard "dancing, singing, shouting, and whistling". Some natives insisted that a distinction was made between ghosts, the harmless people being congregated together, the youths given a pleasant and flowery place, and the wicked being consigned to a place apart. At Motlav it is believed that "the true Panoi is a good place, and there is a bad place besides. . . . Thus if a man has killed another by treachery or witchcraft, when after death he descends the *sura* (mouth) he finds himself withstood at the entrance to Panoi by the ghost of the man he has wronged; he sees another path leading to the bad place he dreads, and so he turns back to earth." If a man chanced to have slain a wicked man, the ghosts of both would reside together, but not in the true Panoi. Bad men are those who have killed others without good cause either by means of weapons or charms, who were wont to steal, to lie, or to commit adultery. Some wicked ghosts are attacked by other ghosts on their way to Panoi and severely mutilated.

It was believed to be possible for living people to visit Panoi. Stories are told of men and women who ventured into the Underworld in search of a loved one, and we sometimes find in these that the visitor is





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SOLOMON ISLANDS



cautioned by the one sought, and advised not to eat of the food provided for ghosts.<sup>1</sup>

In the Solomon Islands the Otherworld is known as Betindalo, and it is supposed to be situated on the south-eastern side of the island of Guadalcanar. The ghosts are conveyed thither in the canoe of the Dead. On arriving, a ghostly official examined the nose of the dead to discover if the cartilage had been pierced. Then the ghost was permitted to follow a path to Paradise.

The small island of Laulau is another Hades island. The test there is the frigate-bird marks on the hands. It must be shown before passing along a "brig o' dread" formed by a tree trunk placed across a gulf. If there are no marks, the ghost is cast into the dark waters beneath.

Three small islands near Ulawa are haunts of ghosts who live a rather aimless existence. They may have to swim to these.<sup>2</sup>

In the southern Solomons the abode of the dead, Dr. Ivens has found, is placed on Malapa Island. "A woman . . . examines the ghosts who reach Malapa, to see whether their ears and noses are pierced and whether they are tattooed."<sup>3</sup>

In Micronesia a hag examines body-markings, and she is known to the Gilbert Islanders. The ghost after lingering for a time near the corpse, goes eastward to visit an ancestral spirit and his advice is: "Go at once forward to the Lady Tituaa-bine, the ancestress, who dwells in Matang-of-Samoa; she will direct thee to thy northern home."

The ghost proceeds southward to Matang-of-Samoa, the land of the fair-haired ancestors. Tituaa-bine says: "This is not thy place; turn again northward and

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 253 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-East Solomons*, pp. 178, 182.



journey until thou comest to Nakaais land of Bouru, which is hard by Matang, for that is thy place."

The ghost goes away, treading the surface of the sea, and leaping from island to island of the Gilbert Group until he reaches Makin in the north. Then he resumes walking over the sea.

In time he reaches a fearsome sea-woman named Kara-ma-kuna, who is the guardian of Bouru. She seizes the ghost and with her long nails tears off the tattoo-marks, which she swallows. Then touching the ghost's eyes so that he may be able to see the land of the dead and its inhabitants, she says: "Pass from Maura, land of the living, to Bouro, land of the dead."

If the ghost has no tattoo-marks, she scrapes out his eyes and swallows them. Then the ghost must go wandering about in the darkness, unable to find the happy land.

On reaching Bouru the ghost sees Nakaa sitting at the gate with his back turned to him, busily engaged in making a net. As the ghost creeps up, Nakaa catches it with a needle and searches his heart to discover if it harbours any evil. If he finds evidence of cowardice, thievishness, or incest, he throws the ghost away to undergo the "punishment of unrestful sleep", or into an eternal entanglement, or impales him upon stakes.

The ghost who passes Nakaa's examination with credit, resides for three days in his village. There he gets nourishment from a tree and a fish-pond. There is only one nut on the tree, but when it is plucked another takes its place. In the pond is one fish, but another appears when it has been caught.

On reaching the land of the happy dead, the ghost is provided with the food of longevity which is of a red colour, and is greatly beloved by the ancestress, Tituaa-

bine who dwells in the vicinity. Occasional visits can be paid to Marira, another Hades to the north of Bouru.<sup>1</sup>

The Marshall Islanders believe that the ghost delays setting out on his journey to the island Paradise for six days. Then he departs to the island of Narikrik. There it crosses a reef which has a guardian named Lorok, and proceeds northward to the place of a malignant demon. If he is not seized by this demon, he goes westward to Eorerok, the island Paradise, sailing in the form of a canoe. The ghost fares well if the canoe is a large one, but if it is small it is doomed to perish.<sup>2</sup>

"The "canoe of the dead" which, as in the Solomons, conveys souls to Paradise, is met with in the Pelew Islands. It carries the ghosts of women to an invisible land called Ngadhalok on the south-east of Pililu Island. The chief mourner pays a sum of money to the head of the family to defray the cost of this passage. Life in the invisible Hades is like that the ghost has left, but evidently much more pleasant for there is no desire to return.<sup>3</sup>

A happy Hades and a hell are known to the Marianne Islanders. The latter is called "House of Chaysi", a demon who tortures unfortunate ghosts, not for any evil they may have done in this life, but because they happened to die by violence. In the happy Hades, which is situated underground, there are delicious fruits, and an abundance of coco-nuts and sugar-cane. The ghosts are able to revisit the earth, where they work mischief against the living.<sup>4</sup>

The Paradise of Ponape, in the eastern Carolines, is situated in the west either on an island or under the sea.

<sup>1</sup> A. Geimble, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. I, pp. 41 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> A. Erdland, *Die Marshall-Inulanen* (1914), pp. 323 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> J. Kubary, *Die Religion der Pelauer* (*Allerlei aus Volks- und Menschenkunde* (Berlin, 1889), pp. 7 et seq.).

<sup>4</sup> Ch. Le Gobien, *Histoire des Iles Mariannes*, pp. 64 et seq.



According to Christian who refers to a submarine Paradise, there is also below the earth a gloomy Tartarus called Pueliko, which is cold, miry, and dark, and is guarded by two fierce hags, one of whom holds a glittering sword, and the other a torch.<sup>1</sup>

In the submarine Paradise there is joy and plenty. Ghosts must cross a "Brig o' Dread", called *Kan Kaper* ("Dancing Bridge"), to gain admittance. On it are fierce spirits which are anxious to carry off ghosts to Tartarus. To divert their attention, the ghosts engage in dancing and take the first opportunity that offers to slip past the fiends who are being entertained, and scamper towards the happy land beyond their reach.

Captain Andrew Cheyne<sup>2</sup>, who visited the Carolines in the middle of last century, writes regarding the religious beliefs of the natives:

"They believe in the immortality of the soul, and that their Elysium is surrounded by a wall, having a bottomless ditch around it. The gate is guarded by an old woman, whom the spirit has to encounter in jumping across the ditch, and who attempts to throw it into this dark abyss. Should it, however, master the woman, and gain an entrance through the gate, it is for ever happy; but should the woman succeed in throwing it into the ditch, it sinks into an abyss of eternal misery."

Apparently Ponapean beliefs regarding the soul's journey differed somewhat, but the idea that there was a Paradise and a hell appears to have generally obtained.

The sky-world Paradise is met with on the island of Yap, the most westerly of the Carolines. All ghosts ascend to Falraman, the great sky-house of Yalafath, the artizan of the universe. If they have not had their ears and noses pierced in the orthodox fashion, they are

<sup>1</sup> *The Caroline Islands*, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Description of Islands in the Western Pacific Ocean*, London, 1852, p. 121.



not permitted to enter at once, but after a period they may steal in and conceal themselves.

The sky-world is supposed to be a replica of Yap, as was the Egyptian sky-world of the Delta and Nile valley. A sea surrounds the sky-island, which has an abundance of fruits and roots, and canoes are provided for those who desire to engage in catching fish, which are to be had in great abundance. In addition to the Great House, there are many private dwellings similar to those on Yap, and there are also platforms of stone where the chiefs sit in council.<sup>1</sup>

Walleser states that the living were in former times supposed to be able to ascend to the celestial Yap, either on the wings of a great fabulous bird, or on a cloud. He also refers to a belief that Lug, the god of death, visits the world at the time of full moon to catch ghosts in his net. He gives these ghosts to a god called Nomou who devours them. Apparently, therefore, all ghosts did not reach the celestial regions.

The Mortlock Islanders similarly believe in a sky-world Paradise. When an individual dies he is, if worthy of being favoured by the god Olaitin, permitted to ascend a ladder to the sky. The ghost must beware of two rocks which alternately smite each other and separate; he must steal between them if he is to avoid destruction.<sup>2</sup>

In the sky-world the ghost has not to engage in any work, food being provided in abundance. Feasting and dancing may be indulged in without restraint, until the sun sinks and darkness comes on. Then the ghosts may descend to the earth and enter into communion with relatives.

<sup>1</sup>S. Walleser in *Anthropos*, VIII (1913), pp. 612 *et seq.*; W. H. Furness, *The Islands of Stone Money*, pp. 147 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup>These clashing rocks are known to the Japanese Buddhists and figure in the Vatican Codex of the Aztecs of Mexico.

The ghosts of the wicked are supposed to be consigned to *Setepwolis* (Sea of Filth), where they lie powerless to move, awaiting the time when the whole world will be destroyed, and their conscious existence will be brought to an end.

A distant land, situated at the meeting-place of sky and earth, is reserved for the ghosts of women who have died in childbed.<sup>1</sup>

In an account of the burial customs of Tubetube (Slade Island), south-eastern New Guinea, the Rev. J. T. Field tells that the first stage of the journey to the spirit-land is a small island called Ulaulalea. A large stone lies on the beach and under it is a cave "leading to a passage under the sea". The ghost goes along this passage and reaches a path which leads to the island of Dekatuwe on the north-east of Tubetube.

"Thence the path passes in a westerly direction under the island of Tonole, thence south-west to another island, Kawana, then on again, always under the sea, to a point on the south of the island of Normanby, called Makumaku, thence to Lebudo, another point on the western side of Normanby. Here the spirit emerges from the passage, and looking across the sea in the direction of Tubetube, before mounting the high hill on the way to Bwebweso, the spirit land, takes a final farewell of relations and native land."

The ghost is not welcomed by the ghosts of his relatives. They question him why he has come and his explanation is that evil spirits having consumed him, he sickened and died and made his way to Bwebweso.

The ghost then goes through a probationary period during which he is cared for by a cousin. If there is no cousin to be found, he must look after himself.

Unlike some of the Fijians, the people of Tubetube

<sup>1</sup> Max Girschner, *Baessler-Archiv*, II (1912), pp. 191 et seq.



who reach the spirit-land do not perpetuate earthly infirmities there. Mr. Field writes regarding the Paradise:

"In this spirit-land eternal youth prevails, there are no old men nor old women, but all are in the full vigour of the prime of life, or are attaining thereto, and having reached that stage never grow older. Old men and women who die as such on Tubetube, renew their youth in this happy place, where there is no more sickness, no evil spirits and no death. Marriage and giving in marriage continue; if a man dies, his widow, though she may have married again, is at her death re-united to her first husband in the spirit-land, and the second husband when he arrives has to take one of the women already there who may be without a mate, unless he marries again before his death, in which case he would have to wait until his wife joins him. Children are born, and on arriving at maturity do not grow older. Houses are built, canoes are made but they are never launched, and gardens are planted and yield abundantly. The spirits of their animals, dogs, pigs, &c., which have died on Tubetube, precede and follow them to the spirit-land. Fighting and stealing are unknown, and all are united in a common brotherhood."

There are obscure ideas about future punishment. Some ghosts cannot be admitted to the inner circle. They must remain in an outer circle where they are permitted to see the happy state of the fortunate ones. All are judged, and the very bad people are condemned to a wandering and sleepless existence, suffering pain through all eternity.<sup>1</sup>

This New Guinea Paradise resembles somewhat the Celtic Tir-nan-og ("Land of the Ever-Young"), the Osirian Paradise of ancient Egypt, and the Hindu Paradise. E

On San Cristoval, which lies near the end of the chain of islands formed by the Solomons, and stretching

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*, pp. 439 et seq.



out into the Pacific from New Guinea, we find that the Paradise has features which are decidedly Hindu.

In the *Mahā-bhārata*, for instance, the Pandava brothers set out for this Paradise on foot, first going to the sea of red waters, then travelling southward, then south-westward, and then northward till they cross a vast sandy desert separating them from Mount Meru on which is situated the Paradise of Indra, called Swarga.

In this Paradise of Swarga is "the celestial river, sacred and sanctifying the three worlds. It is called Heavenly Gangā (Ganges)." Yudish-thira, the elder Pandava brother is informed by a god that when he has bathed in this river he will be "divested of human nature". His grief "will be dispelled, his ailments conquered, and he will forget all enmities". It is related that the hero bathed in the Celestial Ganges and assumed "a celestial form" and he then reached the place where the foremost of men were "enjoying each his respective status".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Fox tells of the San Cristoval Paradise:

"Here is a wonderful river called *Totomanu* and the 'River of Living Water' (*wai mauri*). After a time the *aunga* (spirit) bathes in this and becomes a *hi'ona*. If he has been a good and devout man (*mahasi*) he becomes '*unua*', he consists henceforth of immortal essence, he is said to be united to *A' unua*, the personal nucleus and centre of the prevailing '*unua*', he becomes divine without losing personality, he is a god, and closely united with the Supreme God."

Dr. Fox, who found that among the natives of San Cristoval ideas regarding the ultimate state were rather vague, writes further:

"One who becomes '*unua*' seems to be in future a sort of vice-

<sup>1</sup> *Smāgarahaniha Parva*, Section III

regent for Hatuibwari, one of the serpent spirits henceforth; but all who have bathed in *Totomanu* become akin to these serpent spirits, since they are *hi'ona*. They may return to the world of the living, they will have a serpent incarnation, they are stronger than *adaro* and they possess *mena*<sup>1</sup> and can and do injure men."<sup>2</sup>

Hatuibwari is the Winged Serpent, the dragon-god and creator who came down from the sky to the summit of a mountain under which are the Paradise of the Dead and the river of living water.<sup>3</sup> In his later form, in consequence of his fusion with the Naga cult, Indra had a dragon form: and he had also a solar significance. Hatuibwari had similarly a connexion with the sun.<sup>4</sup>

The San Cristoval ideas regarding the journey of the ghost to the spirit-land, resemble those found elsewhere in Melanesia. The ghost must reach a rock upon which sits the "Fisher of Souls". When a ghost is hooked, this "Fisher", may let it go, or play with it, causing torment. The ghost is then thrown on a rock called "The Rock of the Woman", and is next taken to "The closed Rock" where an old woman examines the ears "to see if they have been pierced". If they have not been pierced, the ghost is cast into a dismal place. The ghost with pierced ears is passed on to Rodomana where he lives for a time among merrymakers, not, however, being allowed to see relatives, before he swims to the island of Maraba on which is the mountain of Paradise. On the summit of this mountain lives the dragon-god, Hatuibwari.<sup>5</sup>

Reference has been made to the Melanesian ideas regarding white ghosts and dark ghosts. As we have seen, it is the dark ghost of a man which, according to

<sup>1</sup> Life-substance.

<sup>2</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, 1924, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Fox, *op. cit.*, pp. 237 et seq., 330.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 234-5.



some missionaries, goes on its journey to the Other-world.

In his story *The Beach of Falesá*, Robert Louis Stevenson gives evidence which indicates that the belief about each human being having two ghosts was prevalent in Polynesia as well as in Melanesia. Uma, the native wife of the trader, Wiltshire, refers in conversation to the two "devils" (ghosts) named *tiapolo* and *aitu*. She says: "*Aitu*, 'nother kind of devil, stop bush, eat Kanaka. *Tiapolo* big chief devil, stop home; all-e-same Christian devil. . . . Suppose Ese (the man Case) he wish something, *Tiapolo* he make him."

Dr. Fox says that on San Cristoval each man is supposed to have two souls—the *adaro* and the *aunga*. The *adaro* is "the shadow from fire or sun, the ghost", and the *aunga* is "the peaceable and good part which after death was permanently severed from the *aunga* (compared to reflection in a mirror or water)". When a man dies the *aunga* goes off on its long journey to the spirit-land. The *adaro* does not leave the body until the flesh comes away. It has *mena* (life substance) and it should therefore be provided with a habitation. "It was housed," says Dr. Fox, "in (1) the skull; (2) a stone statue, or stone head; (3) a stone, perfectly round, or merely a block of stone; (4) an animal, fish, reptile, or bird; (5) a tree." He says that "some ghosts had no home, or their homes were destroyed, and they became wandering *adaro*".<sup>1</sup> There were also *adaro* which were not ghosts but spirits.<sup>2</sup>

The *aunga*, which was supposed to exist during life in the head of a man, becomes a *hi'ona* or *higona* or *figona*, that is, a spirit, after bathing in the living water of the spirit-land of the mountain dragon or serpent-god,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific*, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.



the chief *figona*. The ordinary *figona* were never seen, and were supposed to be in "pools, rocks, waterfalls, or large trees". Dr. Fox proceeds:

"But the chief *figona*, who really received worship and sacrifice, had all of them a serpent incarnation, and, so far as we know, no *figona* had any other incarnation. . . . These serpent spirits could, however, take the form of a stone, or retire within a stone, and sacred stones seem to be connected with *figona* rather than with *adaro*."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Fox shows that the winged-serpent god, Hatui-bwari, belongs to the Araha, the clan of the chiefs. The Araha are the stone-using people who have traditions of heroes who fished up islands and caught the sun in a noose, as did the Polynesian Maui, to lengthen the day. They believe in the life-giving power of water, and show "many traces of sun worship and they practise piercing of the ears and attach a religious value to it, as it is necessary for entrance into the abode of souls". They preserve the dead, "paying especial value to the skull". Stone gongs are used, as in New Zealand and elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fox, *op. cit.*, pp. 78 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 360 et seq.

## CHAPTER XI

### Faiths that defy Death

Old and Young in the Otherworld—Custom of burying Alive—Strangling of Widows—Missionaries' stories of Fiji—Stirring incidents in New Hebrides—Wives follow Husbands to Otherworld—Mothers follow Children—Source of Custom on Tanna—Widow-strangling in New Britain and Solomons—Orphans and Widows sacrificed in New Guinea—Widow-burning in India—Ancient and Modern Records of Custom—Widow's revenge on lover—Ancient Babylonian Human Sacrifices—The Babylonian Saturnalia—Anatolian Custom—Scythian Funerary Sacrifices—Widow-strangling in Thrace—Gaulish Custom—*Suttee* in Northern Europe—Widow-strangling in America.

In the Fiji evidence we find the general belief prevailing that in the Otherworld the young will continue to be young and the old and frail as old and frail as on this earth. Bald heads and grey hairs are not revered; they "excite contempt", writes Mr. Thomas Williams,<sup>1</sup> the Australian Wesleyan missionary, "and on this account, the aged, when they find themselves likely to become troublesome, beg of their children to strangle them". Sometimes the parents may be anticipated by the children. Mr. Williams writes regarding the revolting custom:

"In the destruction of their decrepit parents, the Fijians sometimes plead affection, urging that it is a kindness to shorten the miserable period of second childhood. In their estimation, the use of a rope instead of the club is a mark of love so strong, that they wonder when a stronger is demanded. In many cases, however, no attempt is made to disguise the cruelty of the deed. It is a startling but incontestable fact, that in Fiji there exists a general system of parricide which ranks top, in all respects, as a social institution."

<sup>1</sup> *Fiji and the Fijians*, pp. 183 et seq.

A missionary once took under his care in Somosomo a woman who fell into a very abject state owing to the protracted absence of her husband. There were other two women in the same house, but they neglected her, and she became "reduced to a mere skeleton". Food and medicine were provided from the Mission Station and she gradually improved. But one morning the missionary's servant, who carried food to the invalid, was met by her friends and told to turn back. He was informed that an old woman had called to inquire of the invalid if she was ready to be strangled. It was thought at the time she was still too strong, but the friends afterwards changed their minds and strangled her in their impatience to get the funeral over.

In another case a girl had been in poor health for some time and gave a good deal of trouble. It was decided that she should be buried alive and the chief gave orders to have her grave prepared. The girl heard her friends wailing and stepped outside the house to discover the cause. She was immediately seized and thrown into the grave. "Do not bury me! I am quite well now!" she cried. But two men held her down and soil was thrown upon her until she was silenced.

When a man dies in his prime he is bewailed by his friends and relatives. Extravagant demonstrations of sorrow are on such an occasion a mark of good breeding. Mr. Williams, describing a scene of this kind, tells that he has heard the mourners addressing the dead, saying:

"Why did you die? Were you weary of us? We are around you now. Why do you close your eyes upon us?"<sup>1</sup>

Widow-strangling was a recognized custom. As we have seen, the ghost of the dead man was supposed to

<sup>1</sup> *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 187.



pause on his journey to the Otherworld, awaiting the arrival of his wife or his wives. Mr. Williams informs us:

"Ordinarily the first victim for the *loloku* is the man's wife, and more than one if he has several. I have known the mother to be strangled too. In the case of a chief who has a confidential companion, this his right-hand man, in order to prevent a disruption of their intimacy, ought to die with his superior; and a neglect of this duty would lower him in public opinion. I knew one who escaped; but the associate of Ra Mbombo, the chief of Weilea, was, together with the head wife of the deceased, murdered to accompany him into the regions of the dead."

A chief of limited influence was buried with four women. Another dead chief had his wife at his side, his mother at his feet, and a servant a little distance away.

The women who were strangled were well oiled, and had vermilion or turmeric powder spread over their faces and bosoms, while their heads were dressed and ornamented. Mr. Williams tells that even after the introduction of Christianity this pagan method of treating the bodies of the dead continued in favour. He had a faithful old servant who, when alluding to his approaching death, gave directions about his interment. A female convert, named Lulu, "asked me with concern", he writes, "whether she might be anointed with oil and turmeric after death, and, although dying, her eyes brightened as she told me the size of the cake of turmeric which she had in reserve for the occasion". Mr. Williams tells of cases in which widows declined to be saved from strangling. "Why is it that I am not to be strangled?" exclaimed the chief wife of a native king after two other wives had been done to death. It was explained that "there was no one present of sufficiently high rank to

suffocate her". In another case missionary intervention prevented the strangling of a widow, but she left the Christian village in which her husband had died, crossed the river, and entered a pagan's house in which, according to her expressed wish, she was duly strangled. Other widows who were rescued expressed their gratitude, however.

Dr. George Brown refers to the prevalence in Fiji of burying alive sick or decrepit persons, sometimes at their own request. He tells of a case of a chief who took ill and expected to die.

"Unwilling, however, to die a natural death, he made an effort and managed to walk to a town near his own, and, having assembled the people, reminded them that they had always been kind to his predecessors, and, when required, had strangled them. He went on to say that he did not think he should live long, and wished them to love him and strangle him. They replied that they were wishful to oblige him, but, as they had just *lotued* (i.e. become Christians), it was impossible for them to do so. They suggested that the people of a town near (which was still heathen) would have no scruples, and advised him to go to them. The old chief was unwilling for any but his special friends to do the last offices for him, so returned to his own town, where he was soon strangled."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. John Jackson, who was on Viti Levu, the largest island in the Fijian group, in the middle of last century, was much impressed by the indifference to death which was shown by the natives. One day he conversed with a tall young man, about 20 years of age, who appeared to be slightly ill. He rolled up his sleeping-mat as if preparing to leave the house, and Mr. Jackson asked him where he was going. His answer was startling. "I am going to be buried," said he. Mr. Jackson remarked: "You are not yet dead," but the young man

<sup>1</sup> *Melanetiana and Polynesian*, p. 393.



said he soon would be when he was put under the ground, adding, by way of explanation, that he had not eaten food for three days, and that if he got much thinner the women would call him a *lila* (skeleton) and laugh at him. Mr. Jackson tried to reason with him, but to no purpose, and then preparations were made for burying the young man alive. Mr. Jackson's narrative continues:

"By this time all his relations had collected round the door. His father had a kind of wooden spade to dig the grave with, his mother a new suit of *tapa* (bark cloth), his sister some vermilion and a whale's tooth, as an introduction to the great god of Rage-Rage. He arose, took up his bed, and walked, not for life, but for death, his father, mother, and sister following after, with several other distant relations, whom I accompanied. I noticed that they seemed to follow him something in the same way that they follow a corpse in Europe to the grave (that is, as far as relationship and acquaintance are concerned), but, instead of lamenting, they were, if not rejoicing, acting and chatting in a very unconcerned way. At last we reached a place where several graves could be seen, and a spot was soon selected by the man who was to be buried.

"The old man, his father, began digging his grave, while his mother assisted her son in putting on a new *tapa* (bark-cloth). and the girl (his sister) was besmearing him with vermilion and lamp-black, so as to send him decent into the invisible world. . . . His father then announced to him and the rest that the grave was completed, and asked him, in rather a surly tone, if he was not ready by this time. The mother then *nosed* him and likewise the sister.<sup>1</sup> He said, 'Before I die, I should like a drink of water.'

"His father made a surly remark, and said, as he ran to fetch it in a leaf doubled up, 'You have been a considerable trouble during your life, and it appears that you are going to trouble us equally at your death.'

"The father returned with the water, which the son drank off, and then looked up into a tree covered with tough vines, saying

<sup>1</sup> Nose rubbing instead of kissing.



he should prefer being strangled with a vine to being smothered in the grave.

"His father became excessively angry, and, spreading the mat at the bottom of the grave, told the son to die *fata tamata* (like a man), when he stepped into the grave, which was not more than four feet deep, and lay down on his back with the whale's tooth in his hands, which were clasped across his belly. The spare sides of the mats were lapped over him so as to prevent the earth from getting to his body, and then about a foot of earth was shovelled in upon him as quickly as possible. His father stamped it immediately down solid, and called out in a loud voice, '*Sa tiko, sa tiko*' ('You are stopping there, you are stopping there', meaning 'Good-bye, good-bye'). The son answered with a very audible grunt, and then about two feet more earth was shovelled in and stamped as before by the loving father, and *sa tiko* called out again, which was answered by another grunt, but much fainter.

"The grave was then completely filled up, when, for curiosity's sake, I said myself, *Sa tiko*, but no answer was given, although I fancied, or really did see, the earth crack a little on the top of the grave. The father and mother then turned back to back on the middle of the grave, and, having dropped some kind of leaves from their hands, walked away in opposite directions towards a running stream of water near by, where they and all the rest washed themselves, and made me wash myself, and then we returned to the town, where there was a feast prepared. As soon as the feast was over (it being then dark), began the dance and uproar which are always carried on either at natural or violent deaths."<sup>1</sup>

Codrington, commenting upon the horrible practice of burying alive the sick and aged, admits that "there was generally a kindness intended" and that, as a rule, "the sick and aged acquiesced". He tells of a case of a man at Mota who buried his brother, a victim of influenza. "He heaped the earth loosely over his head, and went from time to time to ask him whether he were

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Capt. J. E. Erskine's *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific*, London, 1853, pp. 475 et seq.

still alive." In Pentecost "a woman after a lingering sickness in a time of famine was buried, and was heard for three days crying in her grave". A shocking case of burying alive occurred during a famine in Leper Island. Codrington tells:

"There was a great man who had a poor brother. In a time of famine the poor man stole food, not asking food from his brother, or taking it from him. The chief buried his brother alive, in spite of his own wife's entreaties and the poor man's supplications; he bound him, dug a grave, put mats in it, threw him in, and buried him. The act was shocking to the opinion of the islanders, but it marked a great man who would do what he chose."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. A. W. Murray, of the London Missionary Society, was for forty years a missionary in the South Sea Islands, and in 1874 published an account of his experiences. He tells of the prevalence in the New Hebrides of "war, murder, cannibalism, the strangling of widows, the murder of orphan children, &c.". Dealing with the island of Anaiteum he quotes a letter from Mr. Powell, a fellow-worker, dated August, 1849, which tells of the strangling of eight widows. In one case a native died and Mr. Powell asked the village chief to forbid the strangling of his widow, "an interesting young woman", and he faithfully promised to do so. Mr. Powell went to the place of mourning and attempted to lead away the widow, but several young men, her relatives, attempted to lead her in another direction. The narrative continues:

"One of these men pushed me aside, and held up his club in a threatening attitude; and by this time another of her relations, a powerful young man, had seized her by the necklace and commenced strangling her therewith, as the proper instrument had been taken over her neck. I made an attempt to interrupt the

<sup>1</sup> *The Melanestians*, p. 247.



murderer; but he tried to kick me and pushed me aside with one hand, while he held his victim with the other.

"Meanwhile, several were standing around with uplifted clubs, and one especially behind me, ready to prevent effectually any interference on my part. I called aloud for the chief to come and forbid it, but in vain; and prudence dictated that I must stand aside, and allow the fearful scene to proceed, the particulars of which are too shocking to describe."<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Geddie, a missionary's wife, once saved the life of a woman whose son and daughter had become Christians. She was, however, "bent on her own destruction", and, during the last illness of her husband, had to be looked after. One night she fled to her brother, believing that he would strangle her when her husband died. Mrs. Geddie sent a Christian native to take her back. He was a powerful man, and as he carried her away by force she did her utmost to escape, "savagely biting his shoulder". She escaped again and hid in an outhouse, but was watched over by a party of Christians.

When her husband died and had been thrown into the sea, "a native mode of burial", the woman was no longer in danger. She was not grateful, however, but scolded Mrs. Geddie, saying: "Why did you save my life and not let me be strangled when my husband died? Who is to provide food for me and this child?" She was carrying a baby on her back.

Mr. Murray tells that "she lived to see and feel differently" although she did not become a "decided Christian", and she "thanked Mrs. Geddie again and again for her self-denying efforts on her behalf".

Mr. Murray writes regarding the terrible custom on Anaiteum:

"The avowed reason for strangling wives was that their souls

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Murray, *Wonders in the Western Isles*, pp. 43, 44.



might accompany those of their husbands to the world of spirits. Married women were accustomed from the time of their marriage to wear about their necks the cord with which they were to be strangled on the death of their husbands as wives in Christian lands wear the marriage ring."

Mr. Geddie, the missionary, went boldly on one occasion to a house in which a man was dying. About forty or fifty persons were assembled there, and he told them frankly why he had come, "and laid before them as well as I could the wickedness of strangling".

Some of the natives showed marked displeasure; others endeavoured to prevail upon Mr. Geddie to go away, assuring him that the man would not die that day.

Mr. Geddie remained and he tells what subsequently happened.

"The body was laid out on a mat and a spear and club placed by its side; also, the small noose which is used in throwing the spear was placed on the forefinger of the right hand. The whole was then bound up together, and a large stone was tied to the feet.

"While these operations were going on, the corpse was surrounded by women wailing in the most hideous manner.

"I waited till I saw the body carried out to the shore, and laid on a canoe to be conveyed to its watery grave.

"I now began to cherish a hope that the widow's life would be spared, as the strangling is always done as soon as the husband dies and usually on the spot; but what was my grief when I was afterwards told that the poor woman had, on account of my presence, been conveyed to another village, more than a mile distant, and strangled there. I saw her body, from my own window, conveyed to the spot where her husband's body had been deposited and thrown into the sea."

Mr. Geddie adds:

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Murray, *Wonders in the Western Isles*, pp. 44-5.

"The cruel practice of strangling prevails to an awful extent on this island (Anaiteum). It is not confined to widows. I have known of two women being strangled on occasion of the death of a child; and when chiefs die several persons are put to death."

Mr. Geddie tells also of a woman who, driven to desperation by the brutal conduct of her husband, committed suicide. In this case a young lad and girl were sacrificed.

Mr. Geddie had a difficult experience one day on Anaiteum with a chief named Nohoat. One of his children was very ill and he intended, if the little boy died, to strangle his wife that she might care for him in the spirit world.

The missionary hastened to Nohoat's house and took his wife and sick child to the mission house. The chief soon appeared. He was furious and ordered his wife to return to his house.

"Mr. Geddie and his party succeeded in getting him quieted down, and his wife and child remained under Mrs. Geddie's care.

"Two days afterwards the child died. Nohoat was inconsolable. He mourned as those who have no hope. He pressed the lifeless body to his bosom, rolled himself on the earth, and cried out in bitterness of soul.

"He made eager inquiries of Mr. Geddie as to what he thought about the soul of the child, and appeared comforted when Mr. Geddie told him his belief that all children dying before they reach the age of accountability are safe.

"Mr. Geddie asked him how he wished the body of his child disposed of—whether thrown into the sea, or buried in the earth. His mind seemed to revolt at the idea of having his beloved child thrown into the sea, and he requested that it should be buried.

"There was no more talk of strangling the mother, and there seems reason to believe that the event was blessed to the father."<sup>1</sup>

A woman who was anxious to be strangled when her

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, p. 71.



husband died, but was protected by native Christians, declared, Mr. Geddie tells, that "if her relations would not kill her, she would run to the bush and strangle herself". She was, however, kept in restraint until it was too late for her to carry out her threat. Mr. Murray, commenting upon this case, says:

"The notion seemed to be that unless the deaths of the husband and wife were so near together as to allow of the bodies being cast into the sea about the same time, the souls would not be able to set out in company on their journey to the world of spirits; and thus the object of strangling the woman would not be secured. Hence the safety of the woman when any considerable interval elapsed."<sup>1</sup>

After Christianity had spread through Anaiteum, there was still a community at one centre which endeavoured to revive the custom of widow-strangling. Mr. Murray writes in this connexion:

"A heathen chief had died and the heathen party, still large in the village (Anauunse), determined to strangle his wife. Times were so altered now, however, that the teacher, with the aid of some Christians, to whom he applied for help, had little difficulty in saving the woman. More than two years had now elapsed since a case of strangling had taken place on the island."<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. J. Lawrie, the Australian missionary, writing regarding burial customs on Anaiteum, says:

"In heathen days the dead body was decorated with strips of native cloth tied round the body to bind the arms and legs; a stone was tied to the feet, and, after the face had been painted with red clay, the body was carried to the edge of the reef and thrown into the sea.

"Only the highest chiefs were buried on land; in that case the head was left above ground, and female mourners watched the

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, pp. 31-3.

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 105.



body until the skin, &c., on the skull was decomposed, which was duly kept in a cave or in the sacred grove. During this time the spirit of the chief was fed by small quantities of food being placed in a basket and hung on a branch of some tree near by. In ordinary cases of burying in the sea a fire was lit on the beach so that the spirit of the departed might come and warm himself if he felt so inclined."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. G. Gill and the Rev. G. Stallworthy found that the practice of strangling widows was introduced into Tanna from Anaiteum. In 1859 they reported that "this diabolical custom is practised in Resolution Bay, and is said to be spreading widely over the island".

The Rev. Dr. G. Turner found that the widow-strangling custom prevailed in various islands in the Pacific. He confirms the statement, however, that it reached Tanna from Anaiteum in recent times. He found that the poor deluded widow rejoiced in it, so firm was her belief "in the reality of a future state". Dr. Turner writes regarding the custom:

"An old chief will say as he is dying, 'Now, who will go with me?' and immediately one and another will reply, 'I will'.

"On the island of Anaiteum this revolting custom has entirely fled before the light of Christianity. By the common consent of the chiefs and people all over the island, it is strictly forbidden, but, strange to say, it has found a refuge and a resting-place still in the group on Tanna. About twenty years ago they commenced to strangle the wives of a departed chief, and the custom spread over the island—another proof of the downward tendency of heathenism, and of its usual development in the increase of human wretchedness."<sup>2</sup>

To the anthropologist who is interested in "culture drifting" evidence such as this is highly suggestive. It shows, for instance, that a custom may prevail for a

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. IV (1892), p. 711.

<sup>2</sup> *Samoa* (with notes on twenty-three other islands), pp. 324, 325, London, 1884.

considerable period in a certain locality and spread thence to another where it continues to survive after it has ceased in the area whence it came. Of course, widow-strangling did not have origin in Anaiteum. It may have been, however, of considerable antiquity there, and its late introduction into Tanna is certainly remarkable. Once it was introduced it was difficult to eradicate. Evidently certain customs which are met with in certain localities are not necessarily such very ancient customs, ancient although the customs themselves may be. In some areas the customs persisted for centuries and then died out and were completely forgotten. From these areas they had previously passed to others and survived until our own time. When therefore we find a certain distinctive custom which has been recorded in localities widely separated in place and time, it does not follow that it had not everywhere a common origin because we are unable to trace the course of the "drift" from point to point from the area of origin to the various areas of perpetuation or survival. The theory of the independent origin in different areas of a particular custom or belief seems hazardous indeed when we consider the evidence as to widow-strangling afforded by the missionary records regarding Anaiteum and Tanna. What happened in connexion with these islands may well have happened elsewhere. The absence of records does not justify theorists in imparting a positive value to negative evidence.

Some would have it that it was "natural" for savages to murder widows. Husbands would "naturally" wish their wives to accompany them to the next world and attend to their needs there. But such a view does not explain why widows should have been given different treatment in different parts of the New Hebrides among peoples closely related in blood and practising similar



arts and crafts. Their modes of thought should have reflected their modes of life. They were all in the same stage of development and should therefore, according to those anthropologists who favour the theory of stratification, have had similar beliefs and customs. We find, however, that on Malekula in the New Hebrides widow-strangling was unknown. "Widows," writes the Rev. T. Watt Leggatt, the Australian missionary, "generally marry again; they are the property of the deceased husband's brother, but he often disposes of them. He adopts the children, if any, and in islands like ours, where population is sparse, children are very much prized."<sup>1</sup>

In New Britain a mountain tribe known as the Sulka buried their dead in the ground and knew nothing about sea burials. If a rich man died his wife was put to death at once. If he had several wives they were all killed as soon as he ceased to breathe, to accompany him to the Otherworld. As a rule a dead person was buried on the morning after death.<sup>2</sup>

Codrington tells that a case was remembered on Saa, "where a wife of a chief killed in fighting asked for death that she might follow her husband, and was strangled accordingly". He gives other instances of the practice:

"At Maewo it has often happened that a woman has demanded to be buried with her husband or a beloved child. Not long ago a woman insisted on it; they dug a grave, wrapped her in mats, and buried her alive with her child. In Leper's Island lately when Mairuru was buried, the people, accusing his wife of having poisoned him, wanted to bury her alive with him; she consented, but the presence of a Christian native prevented this being done."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Ivens tells that strangling was common among the Tolo women "and was resorted to in anger or when under

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. IV, p. 698.

<sup>2</sup> *Archiv für Anthropologie*, XXIX (1904), pp. 214 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> *The Melanesians*, pp. 288, 289.



rebuke". At Saa "an affianced bride, if convicted of unchastity, might be strangled". Sometimes the widows of chiefs "might ask to be strangled or might hang themselves".<sup>1</sup>

On Rossel island in the Louisiade group widows were not strangled. They sat beside the dead until burial took place, showing signs of grief and affection, pressing nose to nose, weeping and cutting their foreheads to make the blood flow. There followed a period of concealment and avoidance. The widow may, however, marry again.<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. Dr. George Brown, Sydney, tells that at the mission station at Dobu (Goulvain Island) in the d'Entrecasteaux group, he saw many bright children who had been rescued from horrible deaths. He says that the case of the oldest may be taken as typical of them all:

"His father and mother were dead, and on the mother's death, as there was no one who would take care of the baby boy she had left, they were preparing to follow out their usual custom, and the child was actually put into the grave to be buried with his dead mother, when he was rescued by Mrs. Bromilow, and has since grown to be a bright intelligent lad. In the case of a girl child, some one would probably have been found to take charge of it, as girls are a source of income when they are sought in marriage; but to the New Guinea mind boys are only a source of trouble, and no profit can be gained for the trouble of rearing other people's children."<sup>3</sup>

In the inland parts of New Guinea widows, until recently, were strangled to accompany their husbands to the next world. This custom is recorded in connexion with Kaiser Wilhelm Land. Mr. Ch. Keysser, a German missionary, tells that among the Kai tribe of Saddle Mountain, the widow-strangling custom still survives. Widows are put to death at their own request to follow

<sup>1</sup> *Melanesians of the South-East Solomons*, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. Armstrong, *Rossel Island*, pp. 104-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. VII, p. 702.

their husbands to the spirit land. Her relatives fear to balk her, believing that the husband's ghost would be angry and would punish them if they prevented the widow dying to wait upon him.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Kiwai Papuans of British New Guinea a widow is for a time secluded and does not even attend the funeral. She "cry all the time, think about man, no want plenty kaikai". When she appears among the people after isolation, she wears her full mourning garb, but as time passes it is discarded piece after piece. The last sign of mourning that remains is a necklace of plaited strings. It is worn until the widow marries again or until death.<sup>2</sup>

The custom of burning widows upon the funeral pyres of their husbands was common in ancient India, and it survived until formally abolished in December, 1829, when Lord Bentinck was Governor-General. According to Captain Evans Bell it was not, however, "penally forbidden until by arguments drawn from Hindoo religious books and favourable opinions derived from Hindoo pundits, we made the idea of abolition familiar throughout the country and enlisted a considerable party on our side".<sup>3</sup>

It does not appear, however, that the custom was of Aryan origin. There is no reference to it in the *Rigveda*, which, on the other hand, regards the widow as the spouse of the dead man's brother.<sup>4</sup> Macdonell and Keith say that the custom "seems to have been mainly usual among families of the warrior class", and add that "in other classes the survival of wives was more necessary". There is abundant evidence that in Vedic times widows could remarry.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> German authorities quoted by Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. 1, pp. 349, 375.

<sup>2</sup> G. Landman, *The Kiwai Papuan*, London, 1927, pp. 256-7.

<sup>3</sup> *The English in India* (London, 1859), pp. 167-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Rigveda*, X, 18, 7, 8.

<sup>5</sup> *Vedic Index*, Vol. 1, pp. 488, 489.



The *suttee* custom is referred to in the ancient Hindu epic, the *Mahābhārata*. When the rajah Pandu dies his two wives, Pritha and Madri, both desire to accompany him to the Otherworld. The latter clasps the corpse and Pritha says:

"I must follow our lord to the region of the dead! Rise up, O Madri, and yield me his body. Rear thou these children."

Madri pleads to be allowed to die, giving reasons why she should be burned with him. "O reverend sister," she says, "refuse not thy sanction to this which is agreeable to me. Thou wilt certainly bring up the children carefully. That, indeed, would be very agreeable to me." Pritha had to agree, and Madri "ascended the funeral pyre of her lord".<sup>1</sup>

After the Great War is over, the ghosts of the dead warriors rise on a wonderful night from the waters of the Ganges and the living hold converse with them. The narrative states:

"Thus the night passed away in the fullness of joy; but when the morning had dawned all the dead mounted their chariots and horses and disappeared. . . .

"Vyasa the Sage said that the widows who wished to rejoin their dead husbands might do so, and all the widows went and bathed in the Ganges, and came out of the water again and kissed every one the feet of Yudishthira and his wife Gandavi, and went and drowned themselves in the river, and through the prayers of Vyasa they all went to the places they wished and obtained their several desires."<sup>2</sup>

At the time when the movement to abolish *suttee* in India was gathering force, Claudius Buchanan wrote:

"From a late investigation, it appears that the number of women who sacrifice themselves within thirty miles round Cal-

<sup>1</sup> *Adi Parva*, Section CXXV.

<sup>2</sup> Wheeler's translation.



cutta every year, is, on an average, upwards of two hundred. The Pundits have already been called on to produce the sanction of their Shasters for this custom. The passages exhibited are vague and general in their meaning and differently interpreted by the same castes. Some sacred verses commend the practice, but none command it; and the Pundits refer once more to *custom*. They have, however, intimated that if government will pass a regulation, amercing by fine every Brahmin who attends a burning, or every Zemindar who permits him to attend it, the practice cannot possibly long continue; for that the ceremony, unsanctified by the presence of the priests, will lose its dignity and consequence in the eyes of the people.

"The civilized world may expect soon to hear of the abolition of this opprobrium of a Christian administration, the female sacrifice, which has subsisted to our certain knowledge since the time of Alexander the Great."

There were some Europeans who considered, however, that the custom should not be interfered with. Colonel Mark Wills, for instance, wrote regarding the problem:

"It has been thought an abomination not to be tolerated that a widow should immolate herself on the funeral pile of her deceased husband. But what judgment should we form of the Hindoo who (if any of our institutions admitted the parallel), should forcibly pretend to stand between a Christian and the hope of eternal salvation? And shall we not hold him to be a driveller in politics and morals, a fanatic in religion, and a pretender in humanity, who would forcibly wrest this hope from the Hindoo widow?"<sup>1</sup>

Robert Southey, the poet, in his notes to "The Curse of Kehama", quotes from various writers regarding the *suttee* custom. Bernier wrote:

"'Tis true that I have seen some of them (widows) which, at the sight of the pile and the fire, appeared to have some apprehension, and that would have gone back. Those demons the Bramins that are there, with their great sticks, astonish them and

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Sketches of the South of India*, Vol. I, p. 499.

hearten them up, or even thrust them in, as I have seen it done to a young woman that retreated five or six paces from the pile, and to another that was much disturbed when she saw the fire take hold of her clothes, these executioners thrusting her in with their long poles."

Bernier is quoted further as writing:

"At Lahore, I saw a very handsome and a very young woman burnt; I believe she was not above twelve years of age. This poor unhappy creature appeared rather dead than alive when she came near the pile; she shook and wept bitterly. Meanwhile, three or four of these executioners, the Bramins, together with an old hag that held her under the arm, thrust her on, and made her sit down upon the wood; and lest she should run away, they tied her legs and hands; and so they burnt her alive. I had enough to do to contain myself for indignation."

In another case Bernier saw five female slaves who of their own free will were burned on a pyre with their mistress and her husband's corpse. They danced together before leaping into the fiery furnace.

Bernier relates, too, a story of a young wife who had an intrigue with a young musician, who was a tailor and a Moslem. She poisoned her husband and told her lover, but he refused to have any further dealings with her. Then she told her relatives that her husband had died suddenly, announcing she would "burn herself with him".

The fiery pit was prepared and the woman's friends gathered beside it, including the young musician and tailor. The corpse was laid on the wood piled in the pit and the fire was kindled.

Bernier continues his narrative:

"All being prepared, the woman goes to embrace and bid farewell to all her kindred that were there about the pit, among whom was also the tailor, who had been invited to play upon the tabor



that day, with many others of that sort of men, according to the custom of the country.

"This fury of a woman, being also come to this young man, made sign as if she would bid him farewell with the rest; but instead of gently embracing him, she taketh him with all her force about his collar, pulls him to the pit, and tumbleth him, together with herself, into the ditch, where they both were soon dispatched."

The French took a lead in suppressing the widow-burning custom. Southey writes in this connexion:

"When the great Albuquerque had established himself at Goa, he forbade these accursed sacrifices, the women extolled him for it as their benefactor and deliverer, and no European in India was ever so popular or so revered by the natives."

Mr. Edgar Thurston<sup>1</sup> of the Ethnographic Survey of the Madras Presidency tells of a ballad which celebrates the voluntary death of a woman now revered as a goddess. She had the "gift" of "second sight", and one day begged her husband not to go to his field as she feared he would be killed by a tiger.

"He went notwithstanding, and was slain as she had foreseen. She killed herself by committing *sati* (*suttee*, or burning of the living widow) on the spot where her shrine still stands."

The once-fashionable view, advocated by Zimmer and others, that the custom was of Aryan origin, has had to be completely abandoned in view of the discoveries recently made in Mesopotamia. At Kish attendants and charioteers and the animals that drew the chariots were slain to accompany their masters to the Otherworld. "This savage practice," writes Professor V. Gordon Childe, "had been abandoned without leaving a trace by the time when Sumerian literature commences." In two tombs at Ur it has been found that "not only the draft animals, but drivers, courtiers, ladies-in-waiting, and

<sup>1</sup> *Omens and Superstitions of Southern India*, London, 1912, pp. 75, 76.



the women of the harem, musicians, and armed guards were obliged to follow their sovereigns to the future world. In the same chamber as the body of Queen Shub-ad lay the corpse of an attendant, while her ladies-in-waiting, harpist, and grooms lay in the shaft where they had been slain. Outside the tomb of a nameless king lay the bodies of twelve women in court dress, soldiers fully armed, attendants, and grooms." It has been suggested, and Professor Gordon Childe favours the view, that the *ushabti* figures in ancient Egyptian tombs of the historic period were substitutes for sacrificed women and servants, the Egyptians having thus transformed the practice of the Nilotic tribes of the south "of slaying wives and menials and burying them with their lord to attend him in the future life".<sup>1</sup>

The builders of the pre-Aryan cities in north-west India were in touch with Sumeria, and it may have been due to the influence and customs of their descendants that the Aryans adopted the *suttee* custom during the post-Vedic period.

Another view of the Babylonian custom is suggested by Mr. Sydney Smith.<sup>2</sup> He shows that in connexion with the *Ziqqurrat* (temple tower) there was an underground structure called the *gigunu*, while another *gigunu* was on the summit. At the New Year festival there were sacrifices, including apparently human sacrifices. The festival celebrated "not only the annual grant of sovereignty" and "the resurrection of the god and goddess from the underworld", but also "the victory of the god over the powers below". It may be therefore that the tombs connected with *gigunus* contain the bodies of human beings who were sacrificed.

<sup>1</sup> V. Gordon Childe, *The Most Ancient East* (1928), pp. 67, 119, 162, 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Asiatic Review*, Oct., 1928, pp. 849 et seq.

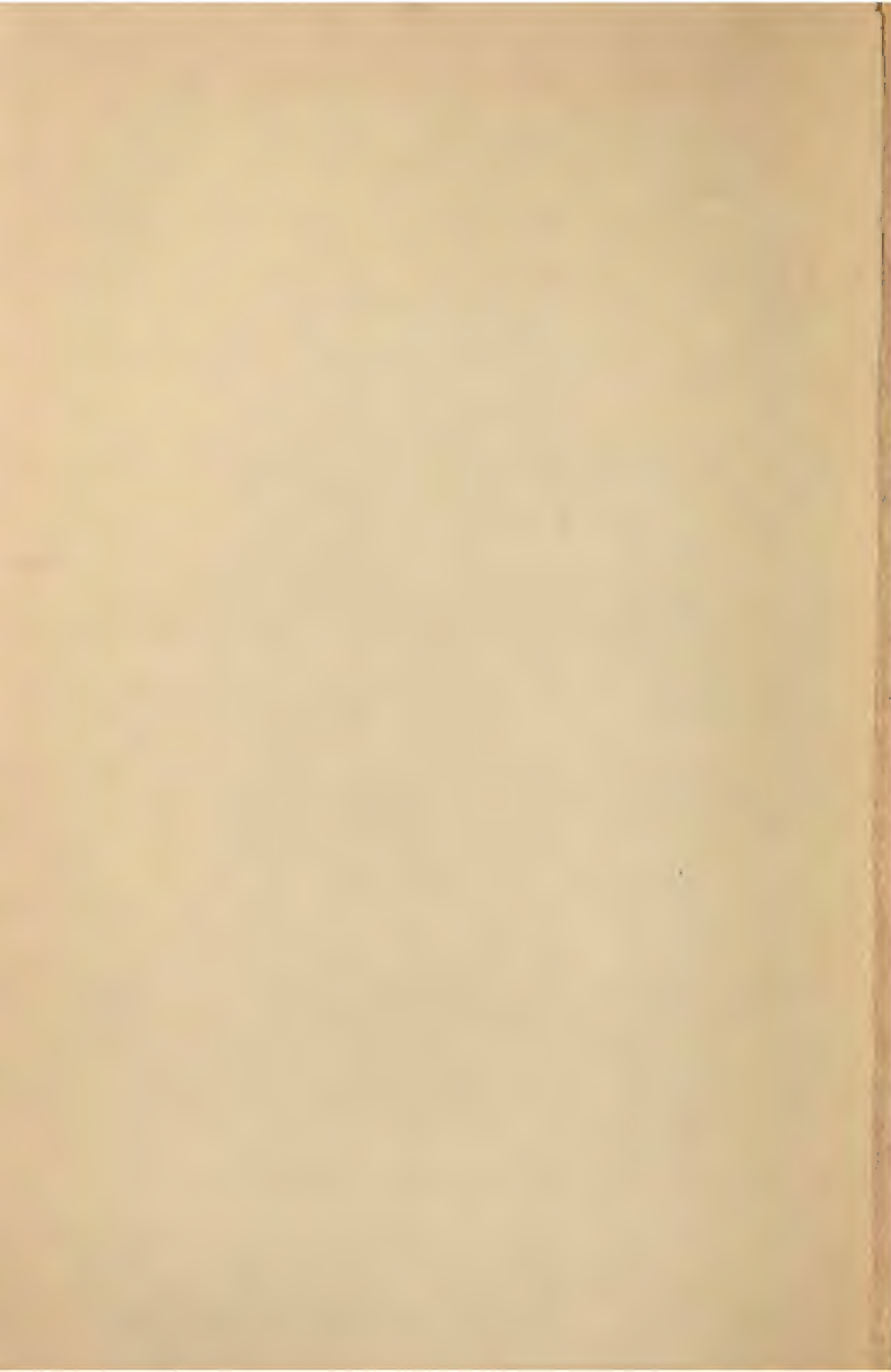


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By permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

**FIGURE OF A GOD, ANIWA, NEW HEBRIDES**

The head is modelled over a human skull.





It has been asserted that the tombs are "royal tombs", but Sydney Smith says "there is nothing in the inscriptions which proves that they are". He goes on to say:

"The immense wealth of these tombs and the very definite proof of human and unusual animal sacrifices call for some special explanation. Human sacrifice at royal burials is intelligible in primitive times. But there is, to my mind, one very considerable difficulty. Mr. Woolley found the burial of a male and a female, with slaughtered attendants outside. If one was a king, the other was a queen, and Mr. Woolley is disposed to believe that the two tombs were closely connected. Where human sacrifice is practised at a king's tomb, one expects the whole of the royal harim to be included. Human sacrifice at a (widowed?) queen's tomb must be unusual and difficult to explain in an Eastern country. But, more important than this, why did the custom drop out of use? For it never appears in any connexion in this country.<sup>1</sup> We have Assyrian royal tombs, but no trace of human sacrifice; yet we know that the Sumerians of this period had already, in most important respects, fixed a tradition which was permanent."<sup>2</sup>

The tombs of Ur and Kish are situated close to *ziggurrats*. In addition to human remains, armour, wagons, &c., there are animal bones. "Obviously there had been a procession to this place," remarks Sydney Smith. The so-called "queen" with barbaric headdress may have been the "goddess bride" of the ceremonial sacrifice. In view of what Mr. Sydney Smith says, it may be that the tombs of the "king" and "queen" were those of the "king of misrule" and the "queen of misrule" during the festival.<sup>3</sup>

At the Roman Saturnalia there was a "mock king", and he was sacrificed after he had for a period impersonated the god. The Greek festival of Cronus and the Hebrew feast of Purim appear to have had links with the Roman and Babylonian festivals.

<sup>1</sup> Mesopotamia.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 863.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 864-8.

In the Anatolian legend of Paris and C  none, the latter refuses to heal her husband's wound, knowing that if she did so he would return to her rival, Helen. When Paris is being burned on the pyre, she behaves (according to Tennyson) like a Hindu widow:

"The morning light of happy marriage broke  
Thro' all the clouded years of widowhood.  
And muffling up her comely head, and crying  
'Husband!' she leapt upon the funeral pile,  
And mixt herself with him and past in fire."<sup>1</sup>

Another version of the legend is that Paris died as he came into the presence of C  none. "She was so struck at the sight of his dead body that she bathed it with her tears, and stabbed herself to the heart."

The strangling of females was known to the Scythians also. Herodotus (IV, 71, 72) tells that the body of a king was embalmed and laid in a sepulchre.

"Here the corpse is placed upon a couch, round which, at different distances, daggers are fixed; upon the whole are disposed pieces of wood, covered with branches of willow. In some other part of this trench they bury one of the deceased's concubines, whom they previously strangle, together with the baker, the cook, the groom, his most confidential servant, his horses, the choicest of his effects, and, finally, some golden goblets, for they possess neither silver nor brass. . . . The ceremony does not terminate here. They select such of the deceased king's attendants, in the following year, as have been most about his person . . . fifty of these they strangle with an equal number of his best horses."

Herodotus (V, 5) refers to the custom as one observed by the Thracians:

"Each man among them has several wives; and no sooner does a man die than a sharp contest ensues among the wives upon the question which of them all the husband loved most tenderly; the friends of each eagerly plead on her behalf, and she to whom

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson's *The Death of C  none*.



the honour is adjudged, after receiving the praises both of men and women, is slain over the grave by the hand of her next of kin, and then buried with her husband. The others are sorely grieved, for nothing is considered such a disgrace."

Julius Cæsar writes of the Celts:

"The obsequies of the Gauls are, in proportion to their standard of living, both costly and magnificent, and at them all objects believed to have been dear to the heart of the departed, including even animals, are flung upon the pyre; indeed, only a little while before the present account was written, at every properly conducted funeral slaves and retainers known to have been loved by the dead man were commonly burnt with their master."<sup>1</sup>

There is a memory of the *suttee* custom in the Volsung cycle of heroic northern European lays. Brynhild, the first wife of Sigurd, avenges her wrong by bringing about his death after he deserts her and weds Gudrun. Sigurd is cremated and Brynhild, at her own request, "was burned there by the side of Sigurd". In one of the versions she is borne to Sigurd's pyre, in another she is burned on a separate pyre "in a chariot hung about with goodly hangings". A third version makes her ride towards the burning pyre, exclaiming: "Gudrun would have died with Sigurd had she a soul like mine."<sup>2</sup>

The custom of sacrificing widows obtained in pre-Columbian America among some of the Red Indian tribes. The Natchez of Louisiana, for instance, observed it regularly. When husbands died widows were strangled as in Melanesia. An eye-witness has recorded:

"A cord is fastened round their necks with a slip-knot, and eight men of their relations strangle them by drawing, four one way and four the other."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *De Bel. Gal.*, VI, 19 (Long's translation), p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> E. Magnusson and W. Morris, *Volsunga Saga*, pp. 124, 107. W. Faraday, *The Heroic Mythology of the North*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Yarrow, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, Washington, 1881, p. 145.



In those areas in which cremation was practised some widows committed suicide. The widows were always led to the pyre and those who did not commit suicide were forced to undergo terrible torture. A widow had to lie beside her husband's body on the pyre and was not allowed to rise until after the fire had been kindled and her body was covered with blisters. An eye-witness tells:

"When the friends of the deceased observe the sinews of the legs and arms (of the corpse) beginning to contract, they compel the unfortunate widow to go again on the pile, and by dint of hard pressing to straighten those members."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. William Robertson, in his *The History of America* (Book IV), dealing with pre-Columbian burial customs, writes:

"In some provinces, upon the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favourites, and of his slaves were put to death and interred together with him, that he might appear with the same dignity in his future station and be waited upon by the same attendants. This persuasion is so deep rooted that many of the deceased person's retainers offer themselves as voluntary victims and count the privilege of accompanying their departed master as a high distinction."

✓ Mr. Charles W. Mead, writing of Peruvian customs, says:

"We are told that on the death of an Inca, or great chieftain, his wives and favourite women struggled for the privilege of burial with him, that they might accompany him into the other world, and continue their services in the other life.

Cieza de Leon says that more than 4000 souls, women, pages and other servants, together with immense riches, were buried in the tomb with the Inca, Huayna Capac."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Contribution to North American Ethnology*, 1877, Vol. III, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> *Old Civilizations of Inca Land*, New York, 1924, p. 73.

## CHAPTER XII

### Motives for Head-hunting

Head-hunters not "Primitives"—Belief that Soul is in the Head—Skull as "Ghost Body"—Ghost Worship not Ancestor Worship—The Preservation of Skulls—Samoan God as a Skull—Skulls of Relatives and Victims—Head-hunting in Melanesia—Heads for New Canoes and New Houses—Mummified Heads in New Zealand—Celts embalmed Heads of Enemies—Irish Head-hunters—Teutonic Customs—Scythian Customs—Assyrian Head-taking—Egyptian Head-customs—West African Head-hunters—Sorcerers use Skulls in India—Naga Tribes as Head-hunters—Heads for Health and Good Crops—Burmese Head-hunters—The Custom in Indonesia—New Guinea Custom—Sarawak Story of Origin of Head-hunting Custom—Heads Necessary for Agriculture—Egyptian Blood Rites—Palæolithic Man's Ideas regarding Blood—Axilian Head-burials—The Quest of Longevity.

The custom of head-hunting in Melanesia opens up a fruitful line of research and is found to be not merely a manifestation of that delight in slaughter which is supposed by some to be a characteristic of savage peoples, but rather a product of civilized conditions of life. Before a people could have become "head-hunters", they had to acquire knowledge of agriculture or horticulture and live in organized communities under the rule of chiefs or kings. Modern "head-hunters" may seem to us very savage people, but, as will be shown, they cannot be regarded as "primitives"; the custom of sacrificing human beings prevailed at one time among advanced peoples like the ancient Egyptians, the ancient Babylonians, as among the Phœnicians, the Celts, the Teutons, the Hindus, the Aztecs of Mexico, &c.



In dealing with the Melanesian evidence, it is of especial interest to consider, in the first place, the ideas entertained regarding the human head.

As we have seen, the evidence of collectors shows that each man is supposed to have two souls. Dr. Fox, in his intensive study of a limited but representative area, informs us that when a man died one soul (the *aunga*) set out for the Otherworld, while the other (the *adaro*) remained for a time in or near the corpse. When the flesh decayed, it became necessary to provide a new body for the second soul (*adaro*), otherwise it would become a homeless, wandering, and troublesome ghost. Dr. Fox has found that this soul might be "housed" in the skull, in a stone statue or stone head, in a round stone or a block of stone, in an animal, fish, reptile, or bird, or in a tree. "The head," he says, "seems to be regarded as the seat of the life of a living man", and that is why it was regarded as a suitable habitation for the *adaro*.

When, therefore, a skull was placed on a platform and sacrifices were offered to it, the belief prevailed that the *adaro* ghost resided in it.

A stone statue, or unshaped stone on a burial mound (*heo*) was not necessarily the ghost-body of a single individual. "Not every dead man," says Dr. Fox, "had a separate statue or stone for his ghost, but one statue or stone was the home for all buried on the *heo*. The painting red of these statues seems to be in sympathy with the painting of the corpse. . . . Stone pillars were also the homes of *adaro* who seemed to prefer stone."

The skate, the octopus, the turtle, &c., might also become "homes" for the *adaro*. Sharks possessing the *adaro* ghosts must, however, be distinguished from the were-sharks which had exchanged souls with shark-men



and not the *adaros* but the *aungas*. If a shark-man dies the shark possessing his *aunga* soul will die; if the shark is injured the shark-man will suffer.

Birds possessed by *adaro* ghosts are omen birds, but they are not necessarily the clan birds of the deceased. The trees entered by the ghosts are those around which graves are situated.

Although the "ghost bodies" are revered and ghosts may be said to be worshipped, it is hardly correct to assert that the "ghost worshippers" are "ancestor worshippers". As Dr. Fox insists "these are not synonymous terms". Some would have it that the religious system involved should be referred to as a "cult of the dead". Dr. Fox writes in this connexion:

"Nor can you rightly speak of people worshipping the dead, when no worship is paid to that part of the dead, the *aunga*, which is the more important of the two. They pay honour to Mr. Hyde because he is so uncomfortably near them, but they have no rites for Dr. Jekyll."<sup>1</sup>

Although some artists are wont, when depicting savages, to give them towsey locks, the immemorial belief that the head was the seat of life has caused the most backward, as well as the most progressive peoples in various parts of the world to pay much attention to their hair.

Dr. Fox, writing in this connexion, refers to the shaving of the heads of babies soon after birth:

"The shaving of the head is done so as to leave a lozenge over the fontanella (*waira*), which is said to be the door by which the spirit comes and goes. At first this lozenge-shaped patch, which is never washed or shorn, is mainly a patch of dirt, but it becomes a patch of hair, a little black tuft.

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*, pp. 236 et seq.

" Later on another tuft is allowed to grow farther back on the crown, and also a third on the back of the head in a line with these two. . . . When a boy grows big he lets his hair grow, sometimes keeping more or less the tuft in front; he really ought to keep his head shaved till he comes out of *maraufu* (seclusion period); and a girl does so until she is married."<sup>1</sup>

When a death takes place peculiar head-shaving customs are observed.

" The husband or wife of the dead shave the whole head; the father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, brother-in-law, uncle, and uncle's wife shave a line across from ear to ear; the children shave the whole of the back of the head behind the ears. The widow and widower let the hair grow gradually in transverse bands having a very odd appearance."<sup>2</sup>

Among the aborigines in the hill regions of the Malay Peninsula one finds evidence of the belief that the soul is supposed to be located in the head. Ivor H. N. Evans heard from the Senoi of Jeram Kawan regarding the soul's journey to the land of the dead, and writes:

" The spirits, which leave their bodies at death by the whorl of hair at the back of the head, pass to the west and try to get into heaven by the gate at which the souls of Malays enter."

They cannot gain entrance and must go round another way, to cross a " brig of Dread " and be weighed by a judge in a pair of scales. The interesting point here is the departure of the soul through the skull as in Melanesia.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. G. Brown tells that in New Britain when on special occasions the chief and all his friends make a great point of displaying their wealth, " a stage is erected and on it

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 213-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Studies in Religion, Folk-lore, and Custom in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula*, Cambridge, 1923, pp. 208-9.







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# SKULL MAGIC, SANTA ANNA, SOLOMON ISLANDS

The skull is preserved inside the wooden figure of a banitis fish.

placed the skull of some deceased relative, probably that of a brother who has recently died". The wealth is arranged round this platform.<sup>1</sup>

On Duke of York Island the usual mode of burial was at sea, but when a chief died his body was placed on a platform where it gradually decayed. "When the head became detached it was carefully preserved by the nearest relatives, whilst the remains were buried in the house at a very shallow depth."<sup>2</sup> In Anaiteum, New Hebrides, a chief was buried "with the head above ground". Women watched the grave until the skin, &c., on the skull decomposed. Then the skull was taken away to be kept "in a cave or in the sacred grove". During the period of waiting until the skull was ready for removal, "the spirit of the chief was fed by small quantities of food being placed in a basket and hung on a branch of some tree near by".<sup>3</sup>

In Samoa, according to the Rev. J. B. Stair,<sup>4</sup> a body might be exposed on a stage set up in a forest, where it was left to decay. The bones were subsequently collected and buried. A chief might be buried until decomposition set in. Then the grave was opened and the head taken away to be hidden in a secret place. The head was thus saved from the possibility of insult in times of war when graves were desecrated by conquerors.

According to Turner the Samoan god Si'u was supposed to appear once a year, about the month of May, "in the form of a skull". The priest of this skull-god was called Lemana ("Powerful"). "If in time of famine or pestilence the family had been preserved, thanks were specially offered to Lemana for having been so successful in his pleadings with the god."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Melanerians and Polynesians*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *Old Samoa*, p. 178.

( 208 )

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 386-9.

<sup>4</sup> G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 396.

Turner found that on Hudson's Island it was believed "the soul after death went to the heavens, but came at a call to the place where the skull was, drove away disease, and spake through the living". He adds:

"The head of the parent was taken up on the third day after burial, and the skull cleaned by the teeth of the children. It was a disgrace and a byword if they refused to do so.

"The hair was cut short as a sign of mourning, and the bereaved went and lived in the bush for a week."

In the temples of the principal gods, Fuelangi and Maumau, rows of skulls of departed chiefs and others were laid on altars. Under the altars "were suspended offerings of pearl-shell and other valuables". Fuelangi, whose name suggests a connexion with the sky world, was represented by "an unchiselled block of stone".

On Arorae, or Hurd Island, the dead were partially buried "until the head separated from the body". Skulls were preserved by a family "as household gods". Turner says that offerings of food were made to each skull and into the mouths of the skulls tobacco smoke was puffed.

On Onoatua, or Francis Island, "the skulls of the departed were preserved and hung up in the houses".

Skulls of ancestors were "treasured as gods" on Nui, or Netherland Island, one skull being kept by a family. Other household gods "were seen in the fish, birds, &c.", and "oblong stones were set up as shrines".

Skulls were greatly revered on the large island of New Caledonia. Turner tells in this connexion:

"At death they dressed the body with a belt and shell armlets. Raised and cut off the finger and toe nails whole to preserve as relics. They spread the grave with a mat, and buried all the body but the head. After ten days the friends twisted off the head, extracted the teeth as further relics, and preserved the skull also.



"In cases of sickness and other calamities they presented offerings of food to the skulls of the departed. The bodies of the common people as well as those of the chiefs were treated thus.

"The teeth of old women were taken to their yam plantation as a charm for a good crop, and their skulls were also erected there on poles for the same purpose."<sup>1</sup>

Father Lambert<sup>2</sup> refers to the New Caledonia custom of burying a corpse with the head near or above the surface of the ground that it might be taken off after decomposition. The skull is then placed in a family sacred place—an open space in a forest where they are set in rows on the ground. Offerings are made to the skulls. When a member of a family is sick a near relative lays sugar-cane leaves beside the skulls, saying: "I lay these leaves beside you and will go and breathe on my kinsman that he may live." Then he proceeds to a sacred tree which he addresses as the tree of his father and grandfather, and utters a similar prayer. Thereafter he chews leaves or bark from the tree and breathes on the sick person, his breath being moist with saliva impregnated with the chewed leaves or bark from the tree in which is the life substance of the father and grandfather.

When fishing is to be engaged in offerings of toasted leaves are made to the skulls and a priest prays for a big catch. The skulls of ancestors are likewise invoked for crops of yams and sugar-cane, as for rain, sunshine, &c.

In the Gilbert Islands ancestral skulls were preserved and anointed and used as mediums for communication with ghosts.<sup>3</sup> In the Marianne Islands the wizards invoked the dead by means of skulls, claiming to be able "to command the elements, to restore health to the sick,

<sup>1</sup> G. Turner, *Samoa* (with notes on the cults and customs of twenty-three other islands of the Pacific), pp. 288, 289, 295, 300, 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Mœurs et Superstitions des Néo-Calédoniens* (Nouméa, 1900).

<sup>3</sup> A. Grimble, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (1921), p. 47 et seq.

to control the weather, to grant their customers an abundant harvest and a successful fishing".<sup>1</sup>

Many other instances of the beliefs connected with the preservation of skulls in the islands of the Pacific could be given, but sufficient evidence has been provided to show that the chief motive was to communicate with the ghosts for the purpose of securing health, wealth, and prosperity; the weather was controlled by ghosts to promote the growth of crops and guarantee good catches of fish.

The skulls preserved were not, however, always those of ancestors and other relatives. Heads of sacrificed human beings adorned either houses or dead houses, sacred trees, sacred platforms, sacred stones, &c. If there was a shortage of skulls, or if human beings were required for a sacrifice, military expeditions were fitted out to obtain victims. Indeed, wars were often waged merely for the purpose of obtaining prisoners who would be sacrificed to the deities. In some communities a local individual might be chosen. On the island of Anaiteum in the New Hebrides, for instance, human sacrifices were "sometimes offered though", the Rev. A. W. Murray tells, "not frequently". He writes in this connexion:

"On one occasion a young man, who was about to be slain, in order to secure, as the deluded people thought, a plentiful crop of bread fruit, fled to Mr. Geddie (the missionary) for protection."<sup>2</sup>

According to Codrington head-hunting is not practised by any of the Melanesians eastward from Ysabel, that is, "they do not make expeditions for the sole purpose of obtaining heads". In the south-east of Ysabel the people were still suffering most seriously in Codrington's time from the attacks of head-hunters. He continues:

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Le Gobien cited by Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. III, pp. 283-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, p. 26.



Fig.

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CEREMONIAL MASK FROM NEW CALEDONIA

1201





"The practice, however, of taking heads and preserving them as signs of power and success belongs to the Solomons generally. The heads of enemies killed in fight are preserved as trophies, and set out on stages as in Florida, or hung up under the eaves of the canoe-house as in San Cristoval. When a chief in the exercise of his authority had a man killed for an offence, or had him murdered out of revenge or hatred, or for a sacrifice, he added the head to his collection; it was a sign of his power and greatness."

Codrington says that "skulls may be seen suspended equally at the entrance of a Solomon Island *oha* and a New Hebrides *gamal*,<sup>1</sup> but the signification is, in all cases probably, distinct".<sup>2</sup>

Codrington tells that when a chief died in Bogotu, in Ysabel, he was buried with the head near the surface. Over the head a fire was kept burning so that they might take up the skull for preservation in the house of the chief's successor.

"An expedition then starts to procure heads in honour of the deceased, now become a *tindadho*<sup>3</sup> to be worshipped. Any one not belonging to the place will be killed for the sake of his head, and the heads procured are arranged upon the beach, and believed to add *mana* (spiritual power) to the new *tindadho*; until these are procured the people of the place do not move about. The grave is built up with stones, and sacrifices are offered upon it."

According to the Rev. A. Penny, quoted by Codrington, the dead man's wife and child were strangled at the open grave and their bodies were then thrown in together with the dead man's valuables.<sup>4</sup>

In the Eastern Solomons a new canoe required a life for its inauguration. A stranger who examined it might be struck from behind without warning, or captives' heads were taken. Codrington tells of a chief of Ravu in Florida

<sup>1</sup> Club house.

<sup>2</sup> A lesson for religious worship.

<sup>3</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians*, p. 345.

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

who bought a new canoe and concealed it in his canoe-house "till a head should have been procured". Head-hunters went out, caught a man, and brought back his head, which was set up at the prow of the canoe.<sup>1</sup>

When a chief's dwelling-house, or a new canoe house, was erected, "a man's head was taken for it as for a new canoe; a boy or woman was sometimes bought to be killed". Codrington tells "it is a matter of tradition that men were crushed under the base of the great pillar of such a house when it was set in its place".<sup>2</sup>

When human beings were sacrificed in Rarotonga to Rongo, god of war and agriculture, "the reeking head of the victim was offered to Tangaroa (Tangaloa)".<sup>3</sup> In the Tangaloa myths of Melanesia, as in the Tuna myths of Rarotonga, the coco-nut springs from the head of the buried hero.<sup>4</sup>

In New Zealand the heads of prominent enemies, as well as those of chiefs of a tribe, were preserved. Special interest attaches in this connexion to the following extract from one of the traditional Maori tales given by Mr. John White.<sup>5</sup>

"Rau-riki fled and took shelter with Kura-tahea. The army pursued, and, in the attack which followed, Rau-riki was slain and his blood was drunk by the high priest whilst it was warm. His head was cured: the brains were first taken out and a piece of wood placed in each nostril; the skin of the neck sewn round a hoop of *Kare-ao* (*Rhipogonum scandens*), so that it might not shrink; the lips were sewn together to prevent the teeth appearing; it was then carefully covered up with grass and placed on the top of an umu<sup>6</sup> and cured.

"His bones were made into needles to sew the garments then

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians*, p. 297, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> R. H. Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> *My Myths of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 301 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> *The Ancient History of the Maori*, Vol. I, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup> Oven.





The features of the deceased are more or less realistically modelled over the skull in fibre, clay, or other plastic material, from Sepik River.



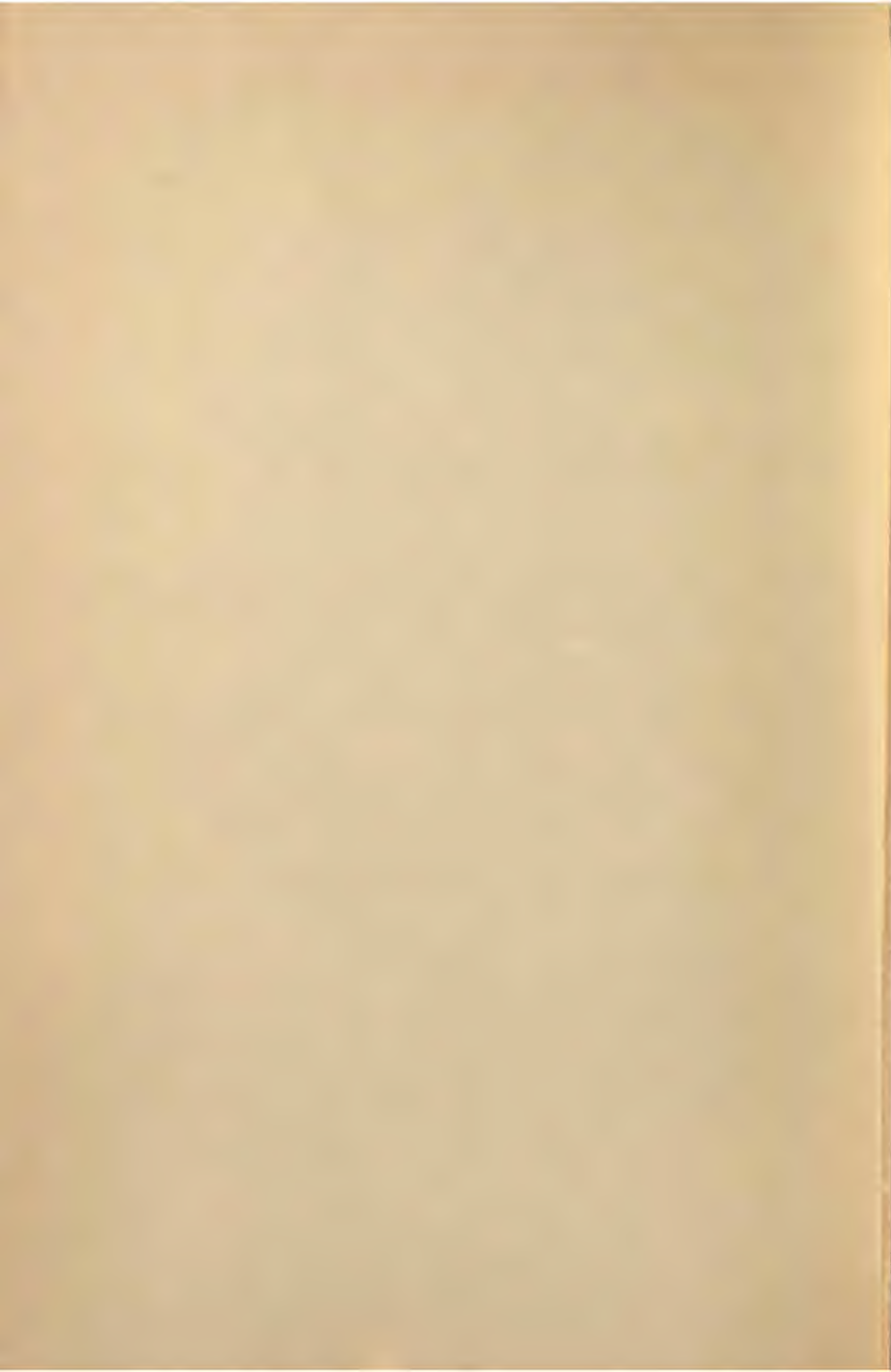
Skull with nose ornament (Kaneke).

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# PRESERVED SKULLS, NEW GUINEA



used by the people, some into hooks to catch fish, and some into barbs for birds and eel-spears.

"The hands were dried with the fingers bent in towards the palm, and the wrists were tied to a pole which was stuck into the ground, and baskets containing the remains of a meal were hung up on these fingers."

Here we have the technique of Egyptian mummification in connexion with the preserving of the head alone, mixed with the non-Egyptian customs of drinking human blood and of using human bones for the manufacture of implements which were required for obtaining food. Evidently the Maori head-preserving custom was meant, like the skull-preserving custom elsewhere, to ensure health, wealth, and prosperity.

From New Zealand to Western Europe is a "far cry"—far enough to emphasize how customs having origin in a common centre may "drift" in opposite directions and become blended with other customs connected with habits of life.

The Celts of Gaul cut off the heads of their fallen enemies and carried them off dangling from the necks of their horses or gave them to their retainers to carry. These ghastly trophies were often exhibited on house doors.

Diodorus Siculus (V, 29), quoting Poseidonius of Apamea, writes regarding the Gaulish custom:

"The heads of their most distinguished foes they embalm and keep carefully in a casket. They make a show of these trophies to stranger guests, and the host says with pride that for this head one of his forbears, or his father, or himself, as the case may be, was offered much money but refused it. And report goes that some of them (the Gauls) boasted they had refused for the head its weight in gold, thus displaying a certain rude magnanimity."

Head-hunting was also an Irish custom. In a Cuchu-



lainn saga it is told that when Cuchulainn is to be buried, Conall Cernach conducts a raid and returns with several heads which are placed round his friend's open grave. There are references in other Irish tales to head-hunting raids.

Blood-drinking and head-taking were Teutonic customs. In the German *Nibelungenlied*, Hagen, during the fight in the burning Hall, calls upon his fellows who are athirst to drink human blood:

"Then went one where he found a dead body. He knelt by the wounds, and did off his helmet, and began to drink the streaming blood. . . . Many more of them drank the blood, and their bodies were strengthened."<sup>1</sup>

When Hagen was taken before the queen and refused to tell where the treasure was concealed, his head was struck off and the queen "carried it by the hair to the Knight of Trony".<sup>2</sup>

Herodotus tells that a Scythian soldier drank the blood of the first man he overcame in battle. He cut off the heads of whatever number he slew, and took the scalps, which he hung from his bridle rein. Skulls of enemies were afterwards used as drinking-cups.<sup>3</sup>

Head-taking was known in Assyria, and, indeed, practised on an extensive scale. A sculptured war scene, for instance, shows triumphant warriors bringing the heads of warriors to Sennacherib (705-680 B.C.).

Heads of enemies were taken in pre-dynastic Egypt. The dynastic Egyptians attached much importance to the head. Elliot Smith and Dawson tell that in the early days of mummification in Egypt one of the methods of preserving the likeness of the dead man was to provide

<sup>1</sup> *The Fall of the Nibelungs*, translation by Margaret Armour (36th Adventure).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 39th Adventure.

<sup>3</sup> Herodotus, Book IV, Chap. 64.

a limestone or mud model of his head, "which was placed with his mummy in the burial chamber".<sup>1</sup>

Head-hunting was a custom in West Africa. Major A. J. N. Tremearne tells that among the pagan Hausas it would appear that formerly young men were not regarded as full members of the tribe until they had taken heads. When a head-hunter is buried a goat or fowl is sacrificed at the grave. A pole is erected upon the grave, "to which are strung all the skulls in the possession of the family". Formerly, "if the deceased had been a chief, people were killed upon the day of the funeral so that their ghosts might serve him".<sup>2</sup>

Frobenius cites the evidence of a French officer regarding head-hunting in the Congo, which is to the effect that a rich man of the Babangi tribe took the heads of slaves during his lifetime as "provision for the after-life"; he makes sure of having attendants "for the upkeep of his future spiritual home and court". In front of the houses of well-to-do Babangi the Frenchman saw tall poles on which dangled "the more or less bleached skulls of slaves".<sup>3</sup>

Thurston tells of human skulls being used in sorcery in Southern India. In one case a skull is ground to powder; in another the skull of a baby taken from a grave was used in initiating a man into the mysteries of the magician's art.<sup>4</sup>

Head-hunting is still a custom among the Naga tribes in the strip of hilly country dividing Assam and Bengal from Burmah, although every effort is made to suppress it in the administered areas.

Mr. J. M. Hutton of the Indian Civil Service, writing

<sup>1</sup> G. Elliot Smith and Warren R. Dawson, *Egyptian Mummies*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Customs of the World*, Vol. II, pp. 798, 824.

<sup>3</sup> *The Childhood of Man* (Kean's translation, London, 1909), pp. 172-4.

<sup>4</sup> Edgar Thurston, *Omens and Superstitions of Southern India*, London, 1912, pp. 228, 241.



on the subject,<sup>1</sup> notes that although heads may be taken because warriors are vain, the idea underlying head-taking is that "the killing of a human being is conducive to the prosperity of the community or of the crops". He tells of a case of a boy purchased from another tribe being flayed and his flesh divided. Each man who received a piece put it in his corn-basket to avert evil and ensure "plentiful crops of grain".

Mr. Hutton quotes from Mr. A. W. Davis, who, writing in 1898, tells of head-hunting taking place to avert the plague of smallpox. According to Mr. Davis "there is a very general superstition among the Angamis and Semas that to kill a human being and place a small portion of the flesh in the murderer's fields is a specific to ensure a good crop". In one raid "two men were partially scalped, while a child was taken away alive and killed outside the village". In the Ao country slaves were beheaded to propitiate the spirits of the dead.

Mr. Hudson says that heads taken by the Lhotas, Rengmas, and Semas are usually hung up in a tree "near the edge of the village". The Aos and the Konyak tribes hang the heads in their houses. Young men of the Angamis and other Nagas found that if they had not taken heads it was very difficult to get girls to marry them. The ghost of a headless man was not admitted to Paradise.

Effigies of human heads, carved out of wood or small gourds and painted, are still hung up in a Naga palaver house.<sup>2</sup>

According to Sir George Scott skull collecting by the head-hunting hill peoples of Burmah "is really a necessary agricultural operation and not a mere vulgar brutal

<sup>1</sup> *The Angami Nagas*, London, 1921, pp. 156 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> L. A. Waddell, *Customs of the World*, Vol. II, p. 1181.



killing for the sake of taking life. Without a yearly skull for the village there might be a failure of rain, or too much of it."<sup>1</sup>

In his survey of Indonesian customs Mr. W. J. Perry shows that the Bontoc (of the Philippines) are head-hunters, and that the body of a man whose head has been taken is not buried like the bodies of others, but placed in a hole in a mountain and covered with stones. A similar custom obtains among the Ifugao of Luzon. In Borneo the Kayan heap cairns over beheaded men. Heads were placed on sacred stones as in the Nagas country. Mr. Perry expresses the opinion that head-hunting in Indonesia "is a modification of the custom of human sacrifice, which appears to be so intimately associated with the stone-using immigrants".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Ivor H. Evans, dealing with the religion and customs in British North Borneo, refers to the rites connected with head-hunting. At Tuaran the skulls of enemies are kept in "long houses". Being an official he could not obtain much information regarding "head-hunting and head-hunting ceremonies", but he once saw a procession of men in single file "keeping up a kind of war-cry, which had a peculiar whistling sound". A buffalo was to be sacrificed, and he ascertained that once a year a buffalo is offered to the heads which have been taken by the head-hunters. In the upper regions of the Tempassuk District head-hunting was formerly prevalent. Heads are preserved in "a special head-house", or "they may be hung up outside a grain store". Mr. Evans has never seen them "suspended in dwelling-houses". He ascertained that after returning home "a purification by bathing is undergone by successful head-hunters, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Customs of the World*, Vol. I, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia*, pp. 22, 26, 30, 63-4, 119.

head is set upon a stone". He saw at Tambatuan in 1915 two human skulls "hanging outside against the wall of a rice-store" and says, "these seemed to have been placed there partly with the idea of protecting the grain against thieves".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Charles Hose tells of his experiences with Aban Jau, a native "Rob Roy of Sarawak", who, after consenting to become a peaceful subject of the Rajah, feared that when he died no head would be taken. Dr. Hose comforted him by suggesting that the head of a former enemy which was in possession of the chief's daughter might be used for the funeral. Aban Jau's mind was set at ease, "and tears of real joy ran down his cheeks".<sup>2</sup>

The period of mourning for the dead could not be concluded in olden days until a head was taken and brought to the grave. Dr. Hose, on one occasion, found the whole Kayan population "in a ferment" because of the failing of the crops and the long period of mourning after the death of a chief. A "few fresh heads" were wanted. In this, as in other cases, peace was made by borrowing skulls to permit of ceremonies being performed.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Hose tells that a group of the malevolent spirits, known to the Kayans as *Toh*, were associated with dried and smoked human heads. About thirty of these heads are kept in a house, and the spirits punish those who do not pay attention to these.<sup>4</sup>

In Formosa the most active head-hunters are the Atayals. They believe, according to Mr. James W. Davidson, that "to be assured of a year of abundance the heads of freshly killed human beings must be offered up to their ancestors". Head-hunting also qualifies a

<sup>1</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *Studies in Religion, Folk Lore, and Customs in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula* (Cambridge, 1923), pp. 11-3 and 22-5.

<sup>2</sup> C. Hose, *Fifty Years of Romance and Research*, London, 1928, pp. 55, 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 106, 117-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Customs of the World*, Vol. I, 224 et seq.



man to be a "recognized adult", to obtain rank and influence and a wife. It also gains "for the individual and his family, and even for the tribe, freedom from pestilence".<sup>1</sup> Mr. Davidson says that every village of the Atayals possesses a small narrow platform in the open air on which heads are placed. A freshly decapitated head is suspended in the jungle and sometimes grain is put into the mouth to attract birds.<sup>2</sup>

Writing of the Dutch East Indies, Mr. A. Cabaton says that "the half civilized tribes of Central Celebes, the Alfuras, and the Toradjas, whose customs are little known, indulge in head-hunting, drink the blood of a conquered enemy and eat his brains to acquire his strength and intelligence".<sup>3</sup> The natives of the Tenimbre Islands, which lie between Timor and New Guinea, are "head-hunters". They live by "hunting, fish, and agriculture".<sup>4</sup>

In British New Guinea head-hunting is engaged in when houses are being built. When the posts are erected a bushman must be killed and also when the timbers of the roof are put in place, and again when thatching takes place. A new house is not supposed to be fit for use "until somebody has been killed for it". Dr. G. Landtman writes regarding the custom:

"The strong fighting men of the tribe, or some of them, go out and kill some enemies, and bring home the captured heads, which they knock against the great post, staining it with blood. . . ."

Before anybody has been killed no man should come in contact with any part of the structure of a *dárimo*; it is particularly dangerous to rest one's head against a post. . . .

If visitors happen to come into a new *dárimo*, they

<sup>1</sup> *Customs of the World*, Vol. I, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 690.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 683.



may be chosen for the victims required. It is not necessary to smear the central post with blood, but considered sufficient that blood is sprinkled about in the house, though the captured heads seem always to be knocked against the post for the sake of the noise".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. A. C. Haddon collected in Sarawak a folk tale of the Kenyah people which was intended to explain how the head-hunting custom had origin. It tells that in the olden days the Kenyahs only took the hair of a man killed on the war-path and decorated their shields with it. A ruler named Tokong was the first to introduce head-hunting. When the *padi* (rice) had been planted, he set out on a military expedition against a tribe which had killed some of his people, and on the third or fourth day, while resting in the jungle, heard on the bank of a small stream a frog croaking, "Wang kok kok tatak batok", signifying "Cut off the head". He asked the frog what it meant, and the frog said: "You Kenyahs are dreadful fools; you go on the war-path and kill people, and only take their hair, which is of very little use, whilst if you were to take away the whole skull you would have everything that you required—a good harvest and no sickness, and but very little trouble of any kind. If you do not know how to take a head, I will show you." Then the frog seized a smaller frog and decapitated it. Dr. Haddon continues:

"Tokong did not think much of this, but one of his *bakis*, or right-hand men, who was an elderly man, pondered long over the incident, and during the night he had a strange dream. He dreamt that he saw fields of *padi*, the plants being weighted down with their heavy grain, and in addition he saw an abundance of other food—sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, and what not. Next morning he said to Tokong, 'I am very much concerned about what the

<sup>1</sup> G. Landtman, *The Kivai Papuans of British New Guinea*, London, 1927, pp. 17-8.

frog said,' and then he narrated his dream. Tokong still appeared to think very little of it, but the other men strongly advised him, if they were successful, to bring back one or two of the heads."

Seven people were killed when the raid took place, and three heads were put into the basket of the old *bakis*. Wonderful experiences ensued.

"They returned at the usual break-neck pace, and found that they were able to travel at a great rate without much fatigue.

"On reaching the river they witnessed a phenomenon they had never seen before; the stream, although it was far above the reach of the tide, commenced running up immediately they got into their boats, and with very little exertion in the way of poling they quickly reached their farms.

"To their surprise they saw the *padi* (rice) had grown knee-deep, and whilst walking through the fields it continued to grow rapidly and ultimately burst into ear.

"The usual war-whoops were shouted as they neared their home, and were answered by a din of gongs from the house. The people, one and all, came out to welcome them, the lame commenced dancing, and those who had been sick for years were sufficiently energetic to go and fetch water, and everybody appeared to be in perfect health.

"The heads were hung up and a fire lighted underneath to warm them, and everything was very jolly.

"Seeing all this, Tokong remarked, 'The frog was certainly right, and in future we must bring back the heads.'"<sup>1</sup>

In this tale we have set forth very plainly the beliefs connected with head-hunting in Sarawak. The decapitated victims were sacrificed to increase the supply of fertilizing water, to make the rice grow in abundance and ripen rapidly, to impart "fresh vitality not only to the hunters but to the whole tribe, for, as is told, those who had been ailing for long became suddenly well,

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Haddon, *Head-hunters*, London, 1901, pp. 397-8.



regaining their former strength, because the heads of sacrificed human beings had been brought in.

The oracular frog in the story is significant, for the frog was in Borneo, as in India, Egypt, and elsewhere, associated with rain-giving and rejuvenation. It impresses upon Tokong the need for blood-letting—for sacrificing human beings and taking possession of "the whole skull" so that the hunters may have "a good harvest and no sickness and but very little trouble of any kind". This revelation, be it noted, is made to the ruler, Tokong, and his elderly friend, the priest or magician, has a dream in which he sees the crops flourishing.

The head-hunting custom did not have origin in Sarawak, but evidently the people had not forgotten its original significance. It was closely associated with the agricultural mode of life, and had origin at a very early period in the history of agriculture. At first the sacrifice of human beings was connected with the growing of barley and millet. Then, when other cereals, including wheat and rice, were cultivated, the same custom was perpetuated. In time, as the agriculturists and horticulturists extended their activities, cultivating all sorts of food-yielding plants in various lands, the sacrificing of human beings to promote growth was adopted far and wide. The traditional religious or magico-religious ceremonies connected with agriculture and horticulture were regarded as of as much importance as the agricultural implements and the knowledge of how to make use of them. Thus as the new mode of life was introduced among peoples who had been hunters, the religious and magico-religious customs connected with agriculture and horticulture from the earliest times were introduced also.

Now, as it chanced, the yield of cereals, vegetables, and fruit-trees was supposed to be promoted by the





Plastered skull with pearly-shell inlays,  
from the Solomons.

Maei embalmed head  
with swastika in  
tattooing.



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By courtesy of Director, Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

# MELANESIAN AND POLYNESIAN HEADS



ruler—the king or chief. As long as he was healthy and vigorous and able to discharge the duties of his high office, the harvests were plenteous and the health of his subjects was conserved, food being abundant. But when the ruler grew old and frail, he had either to be slain and supplanted by one in good health and sufficiently young, or he had to be rejuvenated. The sacrifice of the ruler was supposed to impart strength to his successor, with consequent benefit to the crops. If the king was to be rejuvenated, his blood ("for the blood is the life") having become thin and weak, he had to be supplied with the blood of sacrificed victims.

Elliot Smith, writing in this connexion, says:

"The belief in the efficacy of blood as an elixir of life not only exerted the most far-reaching influence in early religious ceremonies and symbolism, but also was responsible for driving men to embark upon such diabolical practices as head-hunting and human sacrifice to obtain the blood which was credited with such potent magical value."<sup>1</sup>

Discussing the Egyptian myth of the Destruction of Mankind, Elliot Smith shows that it is evidently a record of significant character. The king being responsible for the introduction of irrigation was identified with the river and "the life-giving power of water". Elliot Smith continues:

"His own vitality was the source of all fertility and prosperity. Hence when he showed signs that his vital powers were failing it became a logical necessity that he should be killed to safeguard the welfare of his country and people."

But the time came when the king refused to comply with this custom and had an elixir provided to rejuvenate him. The only medicine in the pharmacopœia of these

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society*, 1917-8, pp. 55-6.  
(193)



times for minimizing danger to life was human blood. Thus in the Egyptian myth we find that when Re, who had been ruling as an earthly king, had grown old, mankind rebelled. Re retaliated by sending the goddess Hathor-Sekhmet to destroy his subjects. "And it came to pass that for several nights Sekhmet waded in the blood of men."

To save the remnant of the people, Re has a soporific drink, mixed with red clay to make it resemble blood, provided for the goddess. She drinks and becomes intoxicated and takes no more cognizance of men.

Re has been rejuvenated, but he says: "I will not wait until this weakness seizeth me again," and departs to the sky world. He thanks those men who had supported his cause and says that the slaughter of the rebels which they had effected on the side of the goddess atoned for the intended slaughter of himself.<sup>1</sup>

Another interesting point about the Egyptian custom is that after human beings were sacrificed to rejuvenate the king, and a substitute for blood was provided, as we see in the myth of the "Destruction of Mankind", the blood of the goddess herself was obtained to rejuvenate Nature. As Elliot Smith shows, the *avatar* or animal form of the goddess, here a cow, there a pig or some other animal, was sacrificed. He thinks "this was the real reason for the abandoning of human sacrifice and the substitution of an animal for a human being".<sup>2</sup>

In the South Sea Islands the custom of sacrificing human beings by taking heads on head-hunting expeditions, or by offering heads and hearts to the deities and ceremonially eating the body, existed beside that of sacrificing animals such as pigs, fowls, &c.

<sup>1</sup> A. Wiedemann, *Religion of the Egyptians*, pp. 58 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *The Evolution of the Dragon*, pp. 111 et seq. and p. 219.

The Egyptian evidence shows how the ruler of a people became closely connected with the water supply and the growth of crops and therefore with the welfare of the people.

It does not, however, afford us a record of the beginning of the belief that an individual could be rejuvenated by providing a red-clay substitute for blood, or for the belief that the spirit of man was in the head.

Before the introduction of agriculture in Western Europe the bodies of the dead were smeared with red ochre. The body of the Cro-Magnon man buried in the Paviland cave in South Wales had been treated in this way, as were other bodies of the Palæolithic epoch found elsewhere. Apparently it was believed that the dead were asleep and would be rejuvenated by the red ochre. I have suggested elsewhere that the persisting traditions of the cave sleepers, like the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, may have had origin in the religious ideas revealed by the burial customs of the hunting period.<sup>1</sup> Body-painting customs may have similarly been connected with the idea that there were particular virtues in the colours used.

The earliest evidence so far obtained in Europe of the belief that the soul was in the head is that of the Ofnet cave in Bavaria. In the Azilian (pre-Neolithic) layer of this cave over thirty skulls were found. The heads had been cut off the bodies after death and deposited in the cave facing the west. The cave opens from the south-west. As a rule, the Cro-Magnon bodies of the earlier period were laid with their faces towards the entrance of the cave.<sup>2</sup>

It would appear that the ancient Egyptians were acquainted with a custom similar to that revealed in the Ofnet cave. In the so-called "Book of the Dead"

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Man in Britain*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>2</sup> *Footprints of Early Man*, pp. 83, 84.



there is a chapter in which the deceased is made to say:

"I am, I am, I live, I live, I grow, I grow, and when I shall awake in peace, I shall not be destroyed in my bandages. I shall be free of pestilence, my eye will not be corrupted, my skin will not disappear. My ear will not be deaf, *my head will not be taken away from my neck*, my tongue will not be torn out, my hair will not be cut off, my eyebrows will not be shaven off."<sup>1</sup>

As will be seen, the Melanesian head-hunting custom and the beliefs associated with it open up a wide vista in the history of civilization. It cannot be explained by reference to Melanesian evidence alone, nor when we seek for clues as to its significance in India. The intimate connexion between the custom and the quest of longevity as well as the concern regarding the food supply,<sup>2</sup> leads us back to the time when the agricultural mode of life was first introduced. In Egypt, where barley, millet, certain vegetables, and fruit-trees were cultivated at a remote period—long before the dawn of history—human beings were, as we have seen, sacrificed to ensure a plentiful harvest and to rejuvenate the king and his subjects. The Babylonian custom of sacrificing the "mock king" and "mock queen" and their followers, referred to in the previous chapter, appears to have been connected with the annual rejuvenation of the ruler, and of the food-yielding soil, as well as with the custom of sending to the Otherworld wives, slaves, and others to serve the mighty dead.

In the South Sea islands there were fusions of various customs that had origin at different periods in different areas, such as the blending of the mummification custom

<sup>1</sup> E. Naville, *The Old Egyptian Faith* (translation by the Rev. Dr. Colin Campbell), London, 1909, pp. 56-60.

<sup>2</sup> In Indonesia and Melanesia the custom of taking heads to provide slaves for the slayer in the Otherworld was connected with the food supply, because the slaves were to be engaged in cultivating crops, &c.



with that of head-hunting. There, for instance, the skulls alone were preserved; there the heads were mummified. Combined with the belief that the head taken rejuvenated a community and promoted the growth of crops, was the immemorial belief that life, or the soul, resided in the head and that the skull was a medium through which the gods or spirits could be invoked. We find also that the skulls were connected with trees and stones. These arbitrary associations had undoubtedly a history outside the Melanesian area. It cannot be assumed that they were of spontaneous origin in Melanesia—that the settlers on the islands forgot all they had previously known on settling on the islands and then proceeded to reinvent the beliefs and practices known to their ancestors in other areas.

In studying the intellectual life of a people in any given area in the world, one is invariably confronted with evidence of the persistence of immemorial beliefs and practices which we may find to be intermixed with, but often little affected by, acquired beliefs and practices introduced by intruders. "Originality," as Dr. B. Laufer says, "is certainly the rarest thing in this world, and in the history of mankind the original thoughts are appallingly sparse."<sup>1</sup>

The idea that the Melanesians and others were continuously speculating and introducing new religious beliefs and practices does not accord with the evidence at our disposal, and that evidence is not inconsiderable.

<sup>1</sup> *Jade*, p. 5.

## CHAPTER XIII

### The Pig in Religion

The Pig and Agriculture—Papuan Connexion with Sago and Coco-nut—Culture Hero and the Boar—Pig "Medicine" for Men and Plants—Pig-form House—Souls as Pigs—New Guinea Pork Taboo—Blue Boar as Demon—Pig and the Aeroplane—Rossel Pork Taboo—Pig comes with Sun and Moon—Solomon Island Pig Sacrifice to War Spirit—Demon Pigs of Solomons—Pork Taboo—Pig Lore and Megaliths—Pig and War—Sacred Pigs of Sa'a—War Sacrifice in Ulawa—Pigs at Burials—Pig-soul Problem—Pigs' Paradise—New Hebrides Pig Lore—When Pigs rivalled Men—Pigs at Birth and Death—Sow's Flesh cause of Death—Pigs at Festivals—Pigs from Sky-world—Sacred Pigs of Fiji—Scape-pig of Fiji—Pig in Polynesia—Origin from Worms on Dead Men—Pigs with Souls—Pork tabooed to Women—Sacred Black Pigs—Pigs from Human Heads—Pigs substituted for Human Beings—No Pigs in New Zealand—Pig-god Oro and Megaliths—Oro and Tammuz—Hawaiian Pig Gods—Pig in life-giving Ceremony—Hawaiian Pig God and Volcano Goddess—Oceanic Names of Pig—The Malayan Pig-demon.

The pig figures prominently in religion throughout the South Sea Islands as it does over a large area in Asia, in ancient Egypt, and other parts of Africa and in Europe and America. A flood of light has been thrown on Melanesian pig lore by Dr. Gunnar Landtman in his recently published account of his ethnographical researches in New Guinea.<sup>1</sup> His carefully gleaned information regarding the pig in religion emphasizes that there is no essential connexion between a culture and a race. We find similar beliefs and practices connected with the pig among peoples of different races in widely-separated parts of the world and embedded in religious systems which differ considerably. A connecting link,

<sup>1</sup> *The Kimaŋ Papuans of British New Guinea*, London, 1927.



The shield on right is decorated with human hair for war.



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# WOODEN SHIELDS, KENYAH-KAYAN TRIBES, BORNEO





however, is the agricultural-horticultural mode of life. The pig appears to owe its prominence in religion to the influence of the ancient peoples who had passed from the Hunting stage of civilization and learned how to produce food by cultivating cereals, vegetables, and fruit-bearing trees.

Dr. Landtman shows that among the Kiwai Papuans "the only domestic animals, properly speaking, are dogs and tamed bush pigs". The natives also tame certain birds. It is believed that in ancient times animals could talk, and "this is still to a certain extent true of birds". The natives detect in the songs of some birds expressions in their own language or in English. As one of them put it in "pidgin English" to Dr. Landtman, "Half he pick up talk belong people what place he (the bird) stop, half he got yarn belong self", while another native declared of a bird's song, "That's all English talk I no been hear".

The pig is supposed to owe its origin to the mythical personage Marúnogére, through whose body passed an unchewed and undigested lump of sago. Marúnogére "threw the crooked fruit stalk of a coco-nut at the pig, and it fastened to the animal and became its tail, and he made the hair out of the fibres of the coco-nut husk. The long tusks as well as the smaller teeth were made of the white kernel of the coco-nut, and after breaking the coco-nut shell in two, he transformed the two halves into the ears of the pig. The end of the snout was made of the sprouting end of a coco-nut (which curiously resembles a pig's snout), and the two notches in the shell became the eyes."<sup>1</sup>

We thus have the pig closely connected with the cultivation of the sago and coco-nut trees.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Landtman, *The Kiwai Papuans of British New Guinea*, London, 1927, p. 443.

Marúnogére, the culture hero, was the first builder of the *dárimo* (men's house) and his life was intimately connected with that of the first pig, a boar. The animal grew very quickly, and he sent people to hunt it with dogs, and the hunters were assisted by a large hawk and a ferocious lizard. Marúnogére wanted the pig to be captured alive.

"The pig, however, was shot dead by a man. After that everybody had to die; if the pig had been kept alive, there would have been no death among men either."

The culture hero inaugurated the *Goro mogúru* ceremony with the dead pig. "Shortly afterwards he died—on account of the pig having been killed." Dr. Landtman tells:

"Marúnogére had told the people to cut up his body after his death and keep some of his flesh and that of the *mogúru* pig, for they were a strong medicine. When mixed together and given to the young men they would make them great warriors and successful harpooners, and they could also be used as a garden medicine and as a poison for killing people. The people dried the flesh till it was as hard as wood and could be kept any length of time."<sup>1</sup>

The pig figured prominently in the *Mogúru* which Dr. Landtman refers to as a "life-giving ceremony"; it includes "the preparation of life-giving medicine for the gardens (particularly the sago palms) and for the people themselves", the instruction of those who have reached puberty, &c.<sup>2</sup>

When a house was built it suggested the idea of a gigantic pig. The four feet of a wild boar were put "in the four corners . . . underneath the floor, the jaw was placed under the threshold of the chief entrance, and the skull in the gable over the same entrance, while

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Landtman, *op. cit.*, pp. 365-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 350 et seq.



the vertebræ are tied "here and there along the ridge spars", and the ribs hung over the spars; bits of skin are attached to the roof.<sup>1</sup>

One of the totems of the Kiwai islanders is the *bóromo* (wild pig), but it is rare. Certain mythical beings appear as pigs, pigs see phenomena invisible to man, they have souls, and souls of human beings appear as pigs or with one foot like that of a pig. Pig lore is very plentiful indeed. There is a period when to the young pork is taboo.<sup>2</sup> When they begin to attend the *Hóriómu* ceremony they refrain from pork. After initiation they are taught to eat it.<sup>3</sup>

The Yabim people of New Guinea believe that "after death their souls will be turned into certain fabulous cave-haunting swine, and accordingly their relatives refuse to spear or to eat the real wild swine. If these animals break into and ravage the fields, their human kinsfolk attempt to appease them with offerings of coco-nuts and other valuable articles."<sup>4</sup>

In Tamara, an island off the coast of New Guinea, "the people will not eat pork, because it is their conviction that the souls of the dead transmigrate into the bodies of pigs."<sup>5</sup>

Sir James G. Frazer tells that the field labourers of the Kai tribe in New Guinea refrain from eating pork, believing that the flesh of the dead pig in their stomachs would attract the living pigs to the crops, and suggests:

"Perhaps this superstition, based on the principle of sympathetic magic, may explain the aversion to pork which was entertained by some of the agricultural peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean in antiquity."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Landtman, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 185-6, 220, 272, 276, 284, 292, 306.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>4</sup> Quoting H. Zahn, *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, Vol. II, p. 296.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

In the Aru Islands near New Guinea it is believed that evil men can assume the form of bats, pigs, crocodiles or birds, and, making themselves invisible, can steal souls.<sup>1</sup>

The Mafulu of British New Guinea during great feasts celebrated at intervals of fifteen or twenty years, sacrifice pigs and dip in their warm blood the human skulls and bones of former chiefs and other prominent persons. The slaughtered pigs are afterwards cut up, and pieces are distributed among the guests, who carry them away for consumption in their own villages.<sup>2</sup>

The scape-pig is known in New Guinea. After a widow has mourned for her husband for about a year, a feast is given, and the brother of the deceased removes her garb of sorrow and "places it around a pig. The sadness has left the woman with the garb and gone into the pig!"<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Landtman gives among the mythical animals of the Kiwai Papuans "a ferocious boar which killed many people". On its head grows "a bush of thorny creepers". He goes on to tell:

"The *Iterari* or *atlaro* is an enormous iguana which sometimes appears in the shape of a man or pig. It lives in the bush either on the ground or in trees. The animal's colour is said to be blue. No arrow can penetrate its back. . . . When the animal shows fight its eyes turn red."

This demon is sometimes friendly to individuals. In human form it once taught a man "many songs and dances". It appears in dreams to give "useful information". The first settlers in Kiwai island found the

<sup>1</sup> E. Crawley, *The Mystic Rose*, (2nd edition), Vol. 1, p. 101, London, 1927.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Williamson, *The Mafulu Mountain People of British New Guinea*, London, 1912, pp. 125 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> F. Hurley, *Pearls and Savages*, London, 1924, pp. 126-127.



demon friendly, and it "protected them against enemies". Dr. Landtman adds that "an *éterari* is still spoken of as the particular local being (*oroórora*) of Kubira (Kiwai island), that animal 'belong them fellow'."<sup>1</sup>

When during Capt. Frank Hurley's expedition to British New Guinea a seaplane was used, the natives regarded Lang, the pilot, and Hurley as "two fella God belonga missionary". At Kaimari the villagers sacrificed a pig which they "placed reverently on the altar-like bow of the seaplane". The pig was removed during darkness to the schooner *Eureka*. "In the morning the village emissaries came out to look for the pig, and when they found it gone, great was their rejoicing. . . . I subsequently learned that the villagers believed the 'Seagull' was a flying demon, and now that it had accepted their offering, its spirit was appeased and no harm would come to them!"<sup>2</sup>

On the island of Rossel (or Yela), the most easterly of the Louisiade group, Papua, the domestic pig is eaten only at feasts inter-connected with a series of social events such as marriages and deaths. Like cannibalism, therefore, pork eating is ceremonial.

The pork feast is connected with complex monetary transactions, but the seller of the pig and his immediate relatives and fellow-villagers do not partake of it, nor does the buyer and others connected with him. When a pig is sold for the ceremonial feast a young man gives one of his names to the animal which then becomes his *binda* (a form of relationship), and when the pig is slain this young man is compensated. There is a distribution of the parts of the sacrificed animal, which has been suffocated amidst the lamentations of the women. Pigs

<sup>1</sup> *The Kiwai Papuans of British New Guinea*, pp. 314-5.

<sup>2</sup> Captain F. Hurley, *Pearls and Savages*, London, 1924, p. 259.



reared in one village are put to death in another. The ceremony appears to be a life-giving one, the pork being "medicine".

According to the Rossel faith the snake-god Mbassi, ancestor of the race, came across the sea at the beginning, bringing with him in his canoe "the sun and the moon, the pig, the dog, and the taro".<sup>1</sup>

Codrington gives an excellent description by a native of San Cristoval of a Solomon Island sacrifice to a war-ghost named Harumae.

The chief sacrificer has the pig strangled and cut up. "They take great care of the blood lest it should fall upon the ground; they bring a bowl and set the pig in it, and when they cut it up the blood runs down into it". The chief sacrificer takes a bit of the pig's flesh and some of the blood in a coco-nut shell and, entering the shrine of the war-ghost, says, "Harumae! Chief in war! we sacrifice to you with this pig, that you may help us to smite that place; and whatsoever we shall carry away shall be your property, and we also will be yours." The flesh is then burned upon a stone and the blood poured on the fire. Subsequently the pig was ceremonially devoured by the worshippers.

Harumae was during life "a great fighting man", who was supposed to have much *mana* (power).<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Fox,<sup>3</sup> referring to the devil pigs of the Solomons goes on to say:

"But most terrible of all is the demon herd of pigs, descendants of the original pigs. It is led by an enormous boar *with a curious flat head*.<sup>4</sup> On his snout grows a tree wreathed in 'ama' fern, and under his chin is a hornet's nest. If this terrible demon boar, Boongurunguru, comes to a village, someone in it will

<sup>1</sup> W. E. Armstrong, *Rossel Island*, Cambridge, 1928, pp. 19, 89, 90, 128.

<sup>2</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians*, pp. 129-130.

<sup>3</sup> *The Threshold of the Pacific*.

<sup>4</sup> Compare with the Set animal of Egypt.

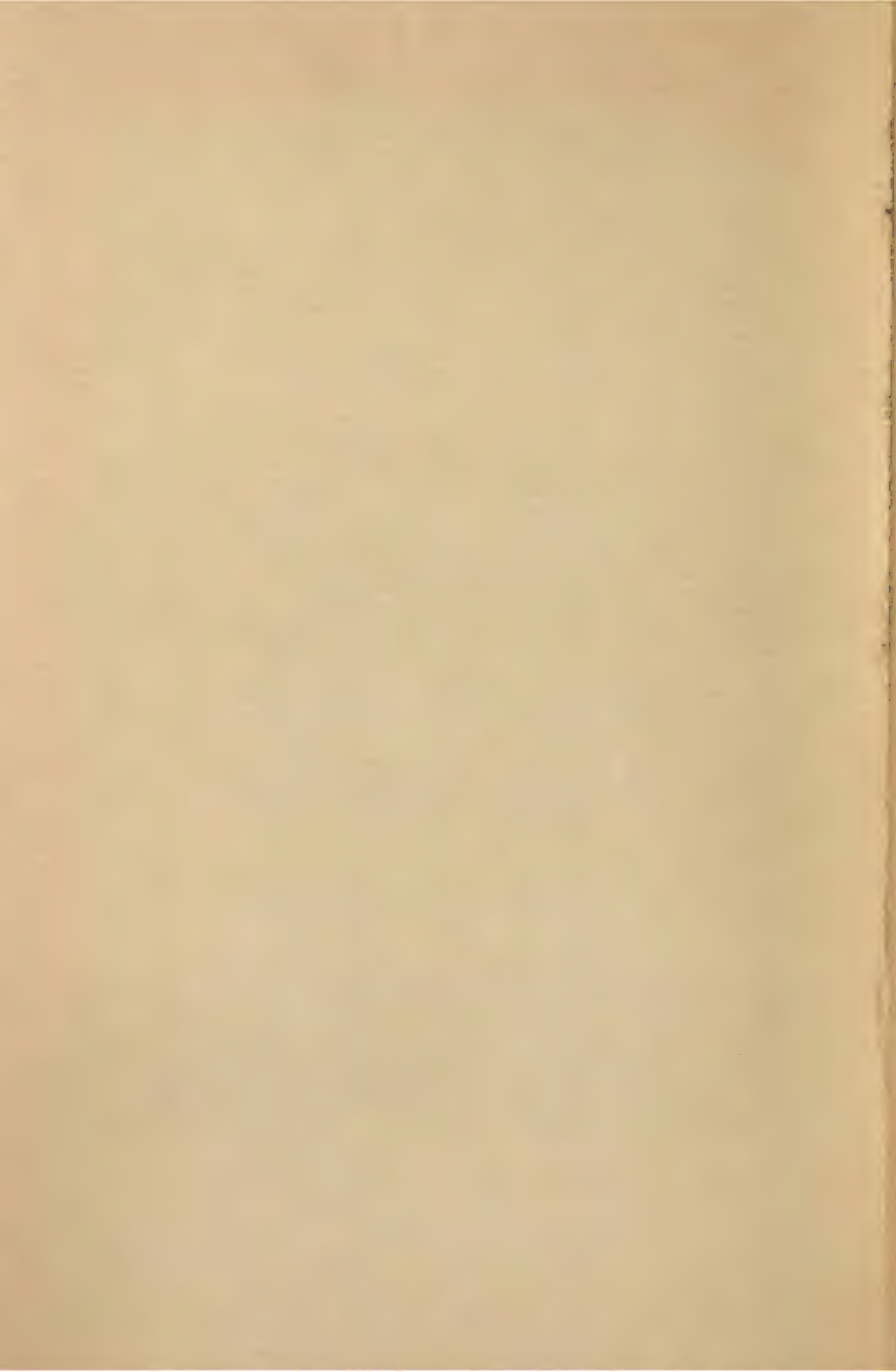


Pl. 93

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**HOUSE-BOARDS, KENYAH-KAYAN TRIBES, BORNEO**

Carved and painted with designs derived chiefly from the dog.





die. The demon herd can often not be seen, only heard; but if, hearing them, you mention that there are pigs about, the air is full of snakes at once. If the whole herd come to a village, every-one in the place will die; as they come nearer and nearer they grow smaller and smaller, till they are hardly larger than mice as they come into the village. They once came very near Heuru, as far as Iriawa—but no one ever sees this sight twice; they are the demon pigs of Umaroa."<sup>1</sup>

Among one of the communities dealt with by Dr. Fox the only animals thought to possess souls are the shark, the pig, the dog, and probably the hawk. Children must not kill these animals in case they are forms of the souls of living men.<sup>2</sup>

At a water hole at Madoa on the island of Ulawa are stone carvings; one of these is "a stone pig 25 feet long from snout to tail, very much worn and bearing now a very faint resemblance to a pig, but yet cut out of the rock". There are also "footprints of a large size".<sup>3</sup> Pigs, puddings, and "coco-nut cream" were offered in sacrifice on a stone.<sup>4</sup>

Fairy-like beings called *Kakamora* live in holes and caves, and are from 6 inches to 3 or 4 feet in height. Pigs are left and killed at a *Kakamora* cave. Some of these beings have one foot, one arm, and one eye, like certain supernatural beings in Hindu and Scottish Highland folk-lore.<sup>5</sup>

The pork taboo is known in the Solomons. Araha children must not eat fish or pork.<sup>6</sup>

In the Eastern Solomon Islands, Dr. Fox has collected much interesting and suggestive pig lore which is connected with the worship of stones and trees.<sup>7</sup>

He tells that a "large bright-red stone" on a sacred

<sup>1</sup> Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific*, pp. 263-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 138 et seq.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 282 et seq.

mound of earth and stones was called Wabina, after the hawk *Bina*. Wabina was a god. His spirit entered a sacred coco-nut (a milk-yielding tree) the nuts of which were taboo. The members of the priestly caste were buried in the mound.

In front of Wabina was a stone on which burnt sacrifices of pig and puddings were offered in time of war. Wabina (or his spirit) then accompanied warriors to battle.

Binauhi (the priest) distributed sacred leaves from a branch with which he had struck the stone of Wabina. The warriors waved the leaves, enclosed in other leaves, over the sacred stone and tied them round their necks, wearing them as "shields" (amulets).

The priest then "prepared to lead the expedition by taking an arrow, touching Wabina with it, and then sticking it into the ground close by Wabina till they were ready to start. If an arrow or spear of Binauhi's (the priest's) struck a man, even if it merely glanced off and inflicted a flesh wound, the man would die; but if Binauhi did not desire to kill him, he would shout *Boomangori* (pig destroyed), and the man, by sacrificing a pig, would recover. He was then called *Boomangori*."

Dr. Ivens tells that at Sa'a a pig has one ear marked and is considered sacred. Even on the occasion of a hostile raid it will be left alone and allowed to die of old age. Another kind of dedication, practised at both Sa'a and Ulawa, is when a ghost appears to a relative "telling him to set apart a pig for him". When the pig is fit to eat, it is devoured by the male members of the ghost's family.

All pigs have ear marks. The sacred pig "had the tip of one ear only cut off", and a similar mark was employed "when a pig was set apart to be eaten sacramentally at some future time".



The cutting up of a pig is done "according to plan", and "two cuts at the back of the neck were the prerogative of the chief, and the next four cuts as well".

At Ulawa a pig dedicated to a ghost might be eaten by the priests alone. It was fed at the beach and slept in front of the canoe house. A name given it was *pusu esi* ("blow out salt water"), the name by which whales are known. When a dedicated pig was ceremonially eaten in the club house, its ears, "along with areca nuts and a plant of taro, were tied up to the rafters and left hanging there". The jaws of pigs killed at feasts "are put on the rafters" of "the chiefly lodge". Offerings of pigs' bones are made to ghosts.

When at Ulawa war was imminent a sacrifice called "Sacrificing a pig at the altar in the bush" took place, and new weapons were made. A "holy spear", which was large and heavy, figured prominently. A pig was tied alive on the spear and put into a fire on the altar. If the pig yelled "it was a sign that the newly made weapons would kill". This ceremonial spear was taken to battle. It was supposed to be a "body" for the war ghost, and was called *wakio* ("fish hawk").<sup>1</sup>

In Banks' Islands, pigs, or parts of them, are hung up at a grave. The pigs may be seen in the paradise called Panoi, to which the souls of dead men pass. But it is not a native notion that pigs have souls. Codrington writes in this connexion:

"Of a pig or an ornament there is a certain something, shadow, echo, of itself that can be seen, but there is not that which man has, the intelligent personal spiritual part which separates from the body in death. When a ghost is seen what is seen? Not the soul, the *atai*, but the dead man, the *tamate*; for the *atai* can never be seen, the *nunuai*, echo, of the body, its *tagangiu*, outline, can be

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-East Solomons*, pp. 30, 263, 302, 321, 407-8, 488.



seen but indistinctly. When an English ghost appears in the dead man's habit as he lived, is it thought to be his soul that appears?"<sup>1</sup>

On Sa'a pigs are sacrificed in connexion with a burial, but they are not supposed to have a soul, *akalo*. Codrington deals again with the problem involved when writing of Florida Island. He shows that there the soul of a living man is a *tarunga*, a spirit, individual, not corporeal, separable during life from the body. After death the *tarunga* departs and becomes a *tindalo*, a ghost. Pigs have *tarunga*, but not a *tindalo*. In Santa Cruz a *tarunga* is called *taluna*, and Codrington says, "I am unable to assign to it any more particular meaning than 'spirit'."

Codrington tells a New Hebrides story of a man who went to a dead chief's "sacred haunt" in the darkness. He heard a whistle (the speech of ghosts is "a sort of whistling" in many lands), and obtained a stone which came "upon his breast". This was a magic stone for producing abundance of a certain kind of pigs, some of the females of which simulate the male sex and "furnish the finest tusks". This breed in the Banks' Islands is called "rawe", and Codrington notes that the word "rawe", according to Dr. Shortland, has "in the Maori of New Zealand a sense which accounts for its application to these pigs".

On Leper Island Codrington heard a story "not seriously told or believed" of a man who went to the "underworld of pigs" where a snake, named Tamatembo ("dead-man-pig") was the master. "The snake had stones in a lump at its neck, and these stones were powerful for wealth in pigs." The visitor to this Pigs' Paradise returned to earth with some of these *mana*-stones, and "had them for sale or hire".<sup>2</sup> Evidently the Leper

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians*, p. 269 and note 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57 and note, 249, 263, 269, 286.

Island folk who gave Codrington this story had ceased to believe in the Pigs' Paradise.

The Rev. A. W. Murray, who was for 40 years a missionary in Oceania, has recorded that on the island of Anaiteum "the fat of pigs was offered to the gods, and at one place on the island, Anelecauhat, where there was a god of peculiar sanctity, and where Nohoat, the principal chief of the island, resided, the shoulder of a pig was occasionally offered". He quotes from Captain Erskine's account of Sandwich Island regarding a large "common house" of a village:

"The show of bones which we had remarked in the first house, and which we were told betokened the residence of a chief, was here exhibited in a tenfold degree, the interior of the roof being entirely concealed by the bundles which were suspended from the rafters. Here hung strings of the vertebrae of pigs, there the joints of their tails; while dozens of merry-thoughts of fowls, and every conceivable bone of birds and fishes mingled with lobster shells and shark fins. . . . As to the object or origin of this curious custom we could get no information; but were told that the passion for collecting these bones is so great that a traffic in them is carried on, not only among the tribes, but with the neighbouring islands."<sup>1</sup>

Turner tells that on Anaiteum it was told that the creator was named Nobu. After creating the human race at Eromanga, another island in the New Hebrides, he went away to another land.

When the natives first saw white men they concluded that "they were made by the same great spirit", and accordingly dark and white foreigners are called "Nobu". Turner adds:

"They say that 'once upon a time' men walked like pigs, and the pigs walked erect. The birds and some reptiles had a meeting about it. The lizard said he thought the pig should go on all

<sup>1</sup> *Wonders in the Western Isles*, London, 1874, pp. 25, 200.



fours, and the men walk erect. The "water-wagtails" disputed this. It ended in the lizard going up a coco-nut tree, falling on the back of the pig and making it stoop and creep as it now does, and ever since pigs creep and men walk erect."<sup>1</sup>

When an aged chieftain was buried alive in Efate in the New Hebrides, live pigs were tied to the arm of the old man. The cords were afterwards cut and the pigs cooked for the burial feast. "The old man, however, was supposed still to take the pigs with him to the world of spirits."<sup>2</sup>

At Uripiv in the New Hebrides pigs are killed soon after the birth of a child, whereupon the child is rated as a man.<sup>3</sup>

At Malekula in the same group the eating of sow's flesh was supposed to cause death.<sup>4</sup>

On Tanna large pigs were cooked "only on festive occasions". The domestic pig is on Eromanga bred for special feasts. It is rarely eaten at the evening meal, but the wild pig is freely eaten.

A variation of the sky-woman story on Tanna tells of pigs coming from the sky-world. A little girl chanced to go too near to a fire of dry leaves in a garden. She was "caught into the draught and carried up with the smoke to heaven". There she felt hungry and began to eat the food of the sky pigs, with the result that the animals made a disturbance. A blind old woman named Masineruk cried out, "Who is there?" and the child answers, telling that she has ascended from the earth on smoke. The old woman welcomes her, and wishes her to stay with her, and the girl makes a mixture to cure the woman of her blindness. After diving into a pool Masineruk's sight is restored.

<sup>1</sup> G. Turner, *Samoa*, &c., p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> G. Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> B. T. Somerville, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXIII (1894), p. 4

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 381.



The little girl pines to return to the earth, and the old woman lowers her on a long line made of creepers. Subsequently the line was again lowered at intervals, "each time with a pig fastened to the end. These pigs were a present to the child and her people from Masineruk." The dark place in the sky close to the Southern Cross is said "to be the opening through which the child and the pigs were lowered".<sup>1</sup>

In connexion with the Nanga ceremony of Fiji a number of pigs were consecrated and held in the greatest reverence. They might be killed for sacrifice only. To feed the sacred pigs was an act of piety, and a man who provided food for them called on the ancestral spirits, saying, "Take knowledge of me, ye who lie buried, our heads. I am feeding this pig of yours."<sup>2</sup>

Wilkes tells that in Fiji a taboo was transferred from a person to a pig. The tabooed person was released from the spell on touching the animal.<sup>3</sup>

There is much pig lore in Polynesia. The Rev. William Ellis, writing regarding the origin of Oceanic beliefs and customs, says some natives informed him that pigs and dogs "were brought from the west by the first inhabitants, but others refer their origin to man". One account states:

"In ancient times a man died, and after death his body was destroyed by worms, which ultimately grew into swine, and were the first known in the islands."

Ellis goes on to say that he never found "traces of the Asiatic doctrine of the transmigration of souls"; but he states:

"they believed that hogs had souls, and that there was a distinct

<sup>1</sup> C. B. Humphreys, *The Southern Hebrides*, Cambridge, 1926, pp. 42, 97-99, 153.

<sup>2</sup> *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XIV, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Narrative of U.S. Exploring Expedition*, Philadelphia, 1848, Vol. II, pp. 99-100.

place, called Ofetuna, whither they supposed the souls of the pigs repaired after their death. . . . Another singular practice in reference to their pigs was that of giving them some distinct, though often arbitrary name, by which he was called, as well as the several members of the family. This difference, however, prevailed—a man frequently changed his name, but the name of the pig, once received, was usually retained until his death.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Ellis, pork and other food offered to the gods were eaten by the Polynesian men, but forbidden on pain of death to the females.<sup>2</sup>

Robert Louis Stevenson, writing of his experiences and observations in the Marquesas, says that “the pig is the main element of animal food among the islands”. Women, however, “must not eat pork”.<sup>3</sup>

Pigs were offered to deceased ancestors.<sup>4</sup> Black pigs were very sacred. Herman Melville states in his *Omoo* that when during a hunt a black pig was killed none of the Marquesans could be induced to carry it, “some invincible superstition being connected with its black colour”.

Turner informs us that in Samoa there is a curious story regarding the origin of pigs.

“A cannibal chief had human victims taken to him regularly, and was in the habit of throwing the heads into a cave close by. A great many heads had been cast in, and he thought no more about them. One day, however, he was sitting on a rock outside the cave when he heard an unusual noise. On looking in, the place was full of pigs, and hence the belief that pigs had their origin in the heads of men, or, as some would call it, a humbling case of evolution downwards!”<sup>5</sup>

A story from Upólu tells how a young hero, the son

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Researches*, London, 1829, Vol. II, pp. 32-3.

<sup>2</sup> W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* (2nd edition), Vol. I, p. 129; Vol. IV, p. 386.

<sup>3</sup> *In the South Seas*, Part I, Chapters VI and XI.

<sup>4</sup> E. S. Craighill Handy, *The Native Culture in the Marquesas* (B. P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 9), p. 222.

<sup>5</sup> G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 111.



of a chief, brought about the death of the cannibal god, Maniloa, who had oppressed the people like the man-devouring giants in our own folk-tales. The hero subsequently took pity on a young man who had been brought from Savaii to be sacrificed and eaten. He had himself adorned with coco-nut leaves, and then slung on a pole and carried to his father, as if to be killed and cooked. The chief was deeply touched and declared that from that time no more human victims were to be killed for the oven, and that pigs were to be used instead.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Elsdon Best draws attention to the "curious fact" that "the pig is not mentioned in Maori tradition". The dog and rat were introduced into New Zealand in past times by the Maori, "but," says Best, "the pig and fowl apparently never reached these shores."<sup>2</sup>

As I have shown in another volume<sup>3</sup> the pig figures prominently in the customs and lore of the cult of the Areois, and as Dr. W. H. R. Rivers points out, there is much suggestive evidence which connects that secret society with the sun cult and megaliths.<sup>4</sup>

Oro, the god of the Areois, had, like the god Tammuz-Adonis of Western Asia, a pig form. The boar was the *ata* (form of the incarnation or embodiment of a god) of Oro.<sup>5</sup> The worshippers of Oro remained inactive when the sun was north of the equator, for the god was then believed to have gone to Po, "the obscure and dark home of the dead". The Areois "suspended all their amusements and bemoaned the absence of the god until the time came to celebrate his return anew at the following equinox". Rivers saw in this fact "a ritual celebration of the annual death of the sun and of its coming to life

<sup>1</sup> G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 238-240.

<sup>2</sup> *The Maori*, Vol. II, p. 354.

<sup>3</sup> *Myths and Traditions of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 240 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> *American Anthropologist* (N.S.), Vol. XVII, No. 3 (July-September, 1915), pp. 431 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> E. S. Craighill Handy, *Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin* 34, Honolulu, 1927, p. 127.



again to bring abundance and fertility". He found in several places in Oceania that the cult of the sun was associated with the cult of dead ancestors and the custom of erecting megalithic monuments. There was, however, in Oceania, "two different streams of megalithic culture".<sup>1</sup>

Although the pig does not figure in Maori mythology, it is very prominent in that of Hawaii. There the gods Kane (Tane) Lu (Tu) and Lono (Rongo) have pig forms, one being a pig-headed man. One of Kane's names was Kane-apuaa, *puaa* meaning pig. "Sacred is the pig," runs a passage in a religious chant. Black pigs were preferred as offerings to deities.<sup>2</sup> When a conciliatory sacrifice was made to a Hawaiian shark-god the head of the family went to the seaside, carrying "a black pig, a dark-red chicken, and some *awa* (kava) root wrapped in a piece of white bark cloth newly made by a virgin". The prayer was recited:

" O aumakua from sunrise to sunset,  
From North to South, from above and below,  
O spirits of the precipice and spirits of the sea,  
All who dwell in flowing waters,  
Here is a sacrifice—our gifts are to you.  
Bring life to us, to all the family,  
To the old people with wrinkled skin,  
To the young also.  
This is our life  
From the gods."

The white bundle of *awa* was thrown into the sea, the dark-red chicken was buried alive, and the black pig was taken to the temple and presented there as an offering.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. H. R. Rivers, *History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. II, p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> W. D. Westervelt, *Legends of Old Honolulu*, p. 34, and my *Myths and Traditions of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 346 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> E. S. Craighill Handy, *Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin* 34 (Honolulu, Hawaii, 1927), pp. 186-7.

Westervelt gives a long Hawaiian story regarding the Hawaiian pig-god Kamapuaa, who had several shapes. Sometimes he appeared as a small black pig or as a gigantic pig, and sometimes as a human being who "concealed his pig-like deformities under a covering of kapa cloth". In human shape he could put to flight many warriors, or transform an enemy into stone; in pig-shape he could not be injured, even by large boulders thrown down over a cliff upon his body. He married Pele, the volcano and fire-goddess, and having quarrelled with her, engaged with her in a fierce war. To escape her lava he transformed himself into a fish which makes a noise "like the grunting of a small pig" and has a thick skin. Pigs were sacrificed to Pele by being thrown into the crater of her volcano, and if a pig could not be secured, the pig-fish was substituted.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Ivor H. N. Evans draws attention to the philological evidence with regard to the pig. Although Tregear in his *Maori Comparative Dictionary*, under *poaka*, a pig, suggests that the term is a corruption of the English word "porker", it appears to be genuinely Polynesian, as is shown by the Samoan *pua'a*, Tahitian *puaa*, Hawaiian *puaa*, Tongan *buaka*, Rarotongan *puaka*, Marquesan *puaa* and Mangarevan *puaka*. In Melanesian Fiji the form is *vuaka*, and in Rotuma *puaka*. The Malay form is *puaka* or *puwaka*. One of the Sanskrit names for a wild boar is *sūkara* which resembles the Latin *suculus* (little pig). The Latin *porcus* is, however, cognate with the Malay-Polynesian *puaka*, as with the Gaelic *torc*, a boar, the Welsh *twrch*, and the Pictish *orc* (surviving in Orkney). MacBain gives the old British as *turch*: \*t-orke-s from \*orke.

<sup>1</sup> W. D. Westervelt, *Legends of Old Honolulu*, pp. 246 et seq., and *Myths and Traditions of the South Sea Islands*, pp. 348 et seq.

Mr. Evans shows that in Polynesian and Borneo *puaka* can mean not only a pig, but "a pig-bodied or pig-faced spirit". It looks as if the Maori remembered the pig spirit although they had no pigs in New Zealand. The Malay Moslems have no idea that *puaka* has anything to do with "pig". To them a *puaka* is a spirit, "either", says Mr. Evans, "a tree spirit or a *genius loci*". Skeat in his *Malay Magic* (p. 144) gives *puaki* as an "earth demon", while Wilkinson in his *Malay Dictionary* quotes the saying "Don't take your water from an eddy; a mighty demon (*puwaka*) dwells there to guard it". Mr. Evans goes on to say: "It seems probable that *puaka* actually did mean pig in Malay at one time, or, if not, a pig-like tree-spirit, vegetation spirit, or *genius loci*; but that nowadays—very likely owing to the introduction of the religion of Mohamed—the connexion of pig with *puaka* has been forgotten (suppressed), and there merely remains the belief that the *puaka* is a tree spirit or *genius loci*."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Icar H. N. Evans, *Studies in Religion, Folk-lore and Custom in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula*, Cambridge, 1923, pp. 292 et seq.



## CHAPTER XIV

### Pig Gods and Demons

Pig Sky-god of Indonesia—Pork Taboo—Pigs with Souls—Pig's Blood for Inspiration—Purification Ceremonies in Indonesia and Greece—Pig in Ceremony of Riddance—Pork Taboo in Borneo—Malayan Taboo—Pig and Agriculture in Borneo—Star Clocks—Pig as Messenger to Gods—Pig-liver Divination—Earth purified with Pig's Blood—Pig sacrificed to wash away Sin—Pig Forms of Human Souls—Indonesian Links with Japan, America, Hawaii and New Zealand—Treatment of Pig in India—Modern Pork Taboo—Buddha's Fatal Diet of Pork—Buddhist Pig Goddess—Buddha's Pig Form—Ancient Hindu Boar Sacrifices—Pig Demons and Pig Gods—Creation Boar-gods—Pig Ceremonies in Modern India—Burmese Treatment of Pig—Pig Lore in Andaman Islands—Mesopotamian Pig Gods and Pig Sacrifices—Tammuz as a Pig—Boar-god as Slayer of Tammuz—Babylonian Omens from Pig's Liver—Assyrian Scape-pig—Assyrian Pork Taboo—Modern Mesopotamian Pig Lore—Treatment of Pig in Syria—Pig in Anatolia—Zeus and Sow-mother—Cretan Pork Taboo—Greek Deities and the Pig—Modern Pork Taboo in Arcadia—Pig as Corn Spirit in Central Europe—Scottish Pork Taboo—Magic Pigs of Ireland—Arabian Treatment of Pig—Moslem Pork Taboo—Treatment of Pig in Ancient and Modern Egypt—African Pig Lore—American Pork Taboos—Pig in Anatomical Teaching.

In Indonesia, which links Asia with New Guinea and the islands of the Pacific occupied by the Polynesians and Melanesians, there is a great deal of pig lore. We meet with pig sky-deities, with gods who protect pigs, a connexion between the pig and agriculture, a connexion between the pig and the dead in the underworld, and with the pork taboo. The Indonesian evidence has been collected from various authorities by Mr. W. J. Perry in his *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia*,<sup>1</sup> and the following notes are taken from that work:

<sup>1</sup> Manchester and London, 1918.

"Among the Bontoc, thunder is said to be the voice of the wild boar calling for rain, and lightning is the voice of the sow which accompanies him." (p. 130).

The pig is thus a rain-bringer for the agriculturists. "Pigs cannot be eaten at the first crop festival" of the Mao tribe (p. 156). The anger of the "sky people" is aroused when pigs and other tabooed animals are laughed at (p. 160). Pigs and certain other animals are "incarnations of the dead" (p. 158). The "soul substance" of a man may assume animal and other forms as pigs, cats, snakes, crocodiles, frogs, mice, butterflies, &c. (p. 151). The pork taboo is prevalent (pp. 98, 99, 157, 158). According to the Naga of Maram a brother and sister were the sole survivors of the Deluge, and were permitted by the gods to marry "provided they and their descendants did not eat pork" (pp. 98-99). A Toradja myth of like character permits the marriage of brother and sister if they sacrifice a pig and a fowl (p. 98). "Pregnant women may not eat wild pig, deer, buffalo, and mountain goat" (p. 157). Pigs and some domestic animals "have two souls" like men, "while other animals and material objects have only one" (p. 159). Mr. Perry considers that the available evidence "points to the stone-using immigrants as the introducers of certain notions between men and some animals. These notions are based, it seems, upon the assumption that men and these animals differ from other organic beings in possessing a "soul substance" which is derived from the sky world" (p. 159).

Sir James G. Frazer, dealing with blood-drinking as a means of inspiration, says that:

"At a festival of the Alfoors of Minhassa, in northern Celebes, after a pig has been killed, the priest rushes furiously at it, thrusts his head into the carcase, and drinks of the blood. Then he is



dragged away from it and set on a chair, when he begins to prophesy how the rice crop will turn out that year. A second time he runs at the carcase and drinks of the blood; a second time he is forced into the chair and continues his predictions. It is thought that there is a spirit in him which possesses the power of prophecy."<sup>1</sup>

The Nicobarese, when a man is supposed to be possessed of devils, rub his body with pig's blood and beat him with bunches of certain leaves. As each devil is drawn forth it is folded in a leaf which is thrown into the sea.<sup>2</sup>

Sir James G. Frazer draws attention to a similar ceremony of purification in ancient Greece in which the laurel was the "instrument of ceremonial purification", and writes:

"From the monuments which represent the purgation of Orestes from the guilt of matricide, it seems probable that the regular rite of cleansing a homicide consisted essentially in sprinkling him with pig's blood and beating him with a laurel bough, for the purpose, as we may conjecture, of whisking away the wrathful ghost of his victim, who was thought to buzz about him like an angry wasp in summer."<sup>3</sup>

In Borneo the pig is used at a ceremony to summon evil spirits so that they may be expelled. A procession of village women is formed. It is headed by a boy carrying a spear on which a parcel of rice is impaled, and two men who bear a gong suspended from a pole of bamboo. A woman carries a sucking pig in a basket. The pig is beaten and its squeals "attract the spirits". A raft is provided for the evil spirits, and when they are supposed to have been lured to it, this raft is set adrift. The pig is slain and its body thrown away.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Magic Art*, Vol. I, pp. 382-3.

<sup>2</sup> V. Solomon, "Extracts from Diaries kept in Car Nicobar", *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* (London), XXXII (1902), p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *Studies in Religion, Folklore and Custom in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula*, Cambridge, 1923.

<sup>4</sup> *The Scapegoat*, p. 262.



Mr. Evans, who describes this ceremony, which is practised in the villages of the Tuaran Dusuns, tells us that among the up-country people of the same tribe "the eating of pork is taboo", and he adds:

"I have been told by a Tuaran Dusun that this is because his people would be ashamed if the neighbouring Bajaus were to revile them as 'pig-eaters'. The down-country Dusuns of the Tempassuk have, however, no such scruples, though their villages are frequently quite close to those of the Bajaus."<sup>1</sup>

The Dusun of Borneo tell a curious story to account for the constellations they call "Spring-trap", "Ror", and "Puru-Puru":

"The people planted tapioca and beans in the days before rice was grown, and the wild pigs ate the crops. One night a man had a dream in which an old man appeared and instructed him to set a spring-trap at the edge of his garden fence. He did so and next morning found that a wild pig had been caught. The body of the animal had, however, decayed, and was not fit to eat. He poked it with the end of his walking-stick, and found that the head was separate from the body, and that the under-jaw and teeth had fallen away from the head."

When he slept that night the old man appeared again in a dream and told him not to plant tapioca and beans but to procure and sow rice, adding:

"The marks where you thrust your stick into the pig's head shall be called the *Puru-Puru*. The lower jaw shall have its name of the *Ror*, and the spring-trap also shall keep its name, and all these shall become stars."

The old man then went on to instruct the dreamer how to plant rice:

"You must watch for the Spring-trap, the *Ror*, and the *Puru-Puru* to appear in the sky and when, shortly after dark, the *Puru-*

<sup>1</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

*Puru* seems to be about a quarter way up in the sky, that is the time to plant. The *Puru-Puru* will come out first, the *Ror* behind it, and the Spring-trap last of all."

The people to this day follow the custom indicated, "and the rice is planted (sown?) according to the position of these stars as seen shortly after dark (about 7 o'clock)"<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that some such myth as this was told in ancient Egypt to account for constellations like "The Thigh", "The Leg", &c., the "star clocks" of the early agriculturists.

A demon called the *Puaka*, known to Dusun folklore, is said to resemble a pig. It has a "very sharp tongue", which enables it to devour the bark of a tree. When Puakas want to feed they "mount up on one another's backs till the top of the tree is reached". The bark is licked off. They can also lick the flesh off a man's bones. If a Puaka meets a man, it stops if he stops, but if the man runs it hunts him. He is, however, safe from attack when he crosses a stream. The pig-demon may cross too, but stops to lick itself when it comes out of the water, and it licks all the flesh off its own bones.<sup>2</sup>

The Kayans of Borneo sacrifice a pig to carry a message to the supreme being. "With a firebrand he (the sacrificer) singes the bristles and prods it to keep its attention whilst he is speaking. After having mentioned what he wants to know, the pig is slain, and the liver examined." The Kayans sacrifice pigs in this manner before any important undertaking. "The answer to their question is then sought for in the liver. If unfavourable, they kill one more pig to see if they have read the message correctly, and if this also is unfavourable they usually abandon the idea."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Customs of the World*, Vol. I, pp. 205, 208.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.



All Kenyahs in Borneo keep numerous domestic pigs. These are not treated with reverence although they play a part in all religious ceremonies, as Hose and M'Dougall show.<sup>1</sup>

During the rites preparatory to a dangerous expedition, a chief is "washed with pig's blood and water". Young pigs are slain before the altar of the high god Bali Penyalong, and their blood is freely sprinkled. "It is probably true," we are told, "that Bali Penyalong is never addressed without the slaughter of one or more pigs, and also that no domestic pig is ever slaughtered without being charged beforehand with some message or prayer to Bali Penyalong, which its spirit may carry up to him."

The most important function of the pig is the giving of information as to the future course of events "by means of the markings on its liver".

When the pig, which is addressed as "Bali Bouin", is given the message, which is really "a prayer to Bali Penyalong for guidance and knowledge as to the future course of the business in hand", some follower plunges a spear into the animal's throat or heart. Then the body is rapidly opened and the liver laid out with the under side uppermost.

"All the elderly men crowd round and consult as to the significance of the appearances presented by the under side of the liver. The various lobes and lobules are taken to represent the various districts concerned in the question on which light is desired, and according to the strength and intimacy of the connexions between these lobes, the people of the districts represented are held to be bound in more or less lasting friendship."

The wild pig which is hunted with the aid of dogs

<sup>1</sup> Charles Hose and William M'Dougall, *The Fagan Tribes of Borneo*, London, 1912, Vol. II, pp. 60 et seq.



and is eaten without ceremony " is never used as messenger to the gods, and its liver is not consulted. The lower jaws of all wild pigs that are killed are cleaned and hung up together in the house, and it is believed that if these should be lost or in any way destroyed the dogs would cease to hunt."<sup>1</sup>

An interesting fact is that the domestic pig is of a different species from the wild pig.<sup>2</sup> A pig or a human being might be sacrificed when a chief died, or when a party returned from a successful war expedition. "It was said that this killing of a human being was equivalent to killing a pig, only much finer."<sup>3</sup> The Kenyas believe that "the objection of the Mohammedan Malays to the eating of pig is due to reincarnation of their souls in animals of that species".<sup>4</sup>

If the crops begin to rot, owing to heavy rains, the Dyaks of Borneo suspect lewdness as the cause. The earth is purified with pig's blood. Formerly offenders were either executed or enslaved. If Dyak first cousins wish to marry, a pig is sacrificed and thrown into a river in which the couple must then bathe together. The couple must afterwards sprinkle the blood taken from the pig on the ground as they "perambulate the country and the villages round about". This is done "in order that the rice may not be blasted".

The Kayans isolate adulterers on an island, and priestesses smear their bodies with pig's blood. If an unmarried Dyak girl is found to be with child the parents "sacrifice a pig and sprinkle the doors with its blood to wash away the sin". A Ceram man guilty of unchastity "has to expiate his guilt by smearing every house in the village with the blood of a pig and a fowl".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hose and M'Dougall, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> Authorities quoted by Sir James G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, Vol. II, pp. 168-9.

A widespread Indonesian story connects the pig with the Otherworld. It tells that a man was one night keeping watch at his fenced cultivated patch to protect his crop against raiding wild pigs. He threw a spear which stuck in a pig's back, and the animal ran away with it. Next day the man followed the trail and found tracks leading to a hole in the rocks. He entered the hole and went down and down until he reached a village. Following the drops of blood, he came to a house in which he heard sounds of suffering. A man appeared and asked him what he wanted, and the intruder explained that he had come for his spear which had been carried off by a pig.

"You have speared my daughter," the man said, "and must cure her. When she recovers she will marry you."

He entered the house, and saw the skins of pigs suspended from the rafters. He cured the wounded girl, and she became his bride, but he could not forget his wife and children, and longed to return to them. Ultimately he put on a pig skin and accompanied other Underworld folk who had done likewise. They led him back to his home and told him to close his eyes. He did so, and when he reopened them he found he had resumed human shape again. One of the pig folk advised him not to kill pigs again, although they might raid his crop.

Another version of the story relates that seven brothers were out hunting and one wounded a pig which ran off with a spear sticking in its body and entered a deep hole. The brothers went to the hole, and the eldest descended on a long vine, but he became terrified owing to the great depth of the hole and climbed up again. One by one the other brothers attempted to descend, but lost nerve and returned, except the youngest brother,



who descended to the bottom of the hole. He reached the house of the chief, and found he was suffering from a spear wound. He cured this man. When he was walking back to the hole, to return to the upper world, he met seven beautiful maidens who asked to accompany him. He had them all pulled up by the brothers and the maidens became their wives.

Dr. R. B. Dixon says that "the occurrence of this tale in Japan and on the north-west coast of America is a feature of considerable interest".<sup>1</sup>

Stories of like character are found in Polynesia.<sup>2</sup> A Hawaiian legend, dealing with the origin of the royal family of the "House of Kalakaua", tells that the ancestral god Ku formerly lived as a human being on the western side of the island. He had a son who became chief and was known as "Hiku of the Forest". The young chief left his mountain home and a young chiefess on the sea-shore placed a garland of flowers on his shoulders to signify that she had taken him to be her husband. The couple lived together for a time, but at length Hiku grew weary of the sea-shore and returned to the upland forest. His bride tried to follow him, but the vines of the uplands caught her arms and legs and held her. She returned to her desolated home, and winding the vines round her head and neck, choked herself.

Hiku was informed by his father of his wife's death. He had seen her spirit passing "down to the kingdom of Milu, the home of ghosts". Hiku resolved to recover the spirit, and descended by means of a vine to the Underworld through "a hole near the sea-shore in the valley of Waipio on the eastern coast of the island". He found and returned with her spirit, taking it back in a

<sup>1</sup> *The Mythologies of All Races: Oceanic*. Boston, 1916, pp. 243-5.

<sup>2</sup> W. D. Westervelt, *Legends of Gods and Ghosts (Hawaiian Mythology)*, Boston and London, 1915, pp. 224 *et seq.*



coco-nut. Ku, his father, pulled up the vine in the hole and afterwards helped him to climb the steep precipices surrounding Waipio valley.

The spirit of the young bride had left her body through the "‘spirit door’ . . . the little hole in the corner of the eye". Hiku caused it to re-enter the body through the feet. "To try to send the spirit back into the body by placing it in the lua-uhane, or ‘door of the soul’, would be to have it where it had to depart from the body rather than enter it."

Mr. Westervelt gives in an appendix the Maori legend "The Deceiving of Kewa", which is of similar character. To find his sister a hero enters a cave. "This cave was the road by which the departed spirits went to spiritland." He, too, is hauled up out of the Underworld, but by means of a net.

A myth from the Philippines tells of a woman who gave birth to three pigs which subsequently turned into boys.<sup>1</sup>

The Moslem pork taboo prevails in Malay, but Skeat refers to "several superstitions about the wild boar which prove that it was not always regarded as an unclean animal". One of these is that if a wild pig is killed and old "scrap" brass is sewn into its paunch and the body burned, those who dig up the remains will find that the brass has been turned into gold. Certain wild boars "are believed to carry on their tusches a talisman of extraordinary power which is called . . . 'Wild Boar's Chain'". The boar, before wallowing, hangs this talisman on a shrub, and the Malays occasionally steal it. A were-boar is sometimes seen "escaping from a grave".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915, pp. 116 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*, London, 1900, pp. 188-9.

Among the Negrito-Sakai of Upper Perak in the Malay Peninsula, "the women do not eat the meat of the *Rusa*-deer, the Muntjac, or the wild pig, since, if they did so, it would cause sickness either in themselves or in their children".<sup>1</sup>

There is a great deal of evidence regarding the religious treatment of the pig in India.

According to Ælian, the Hindus of his day never ate the flesh of the pig, regarding a diet of pork "with as much horror as a diet of human flesh".<sup>2</sup>

The pork taboo is still prevalent in India among Moslems and Hindus. It does not appear, however, to have been originally introduced by the Aryan tribes of the Vedic period, but rather by the earlier Dravidians whose influence in the religious life of India can be traced in the literature of the post Vedic culture-mixing period which witnessed the partial eclipse of the Vedic by the Brahmanic gods.

In Buddha's time (c. 550-481 B.C.), there were pork-eating communities in India. On his last missionary journey Gautama arrived at Pava where he was entertained by Chunda the goldsmith, a man of one of the lower castes. A meal of rice and young pork was provided for him, and having partaken of it, he proceeded on his way towards the town of Kusi-nagara. He took ill when about half way, and was obliged to rest. After drinking water and bathing in a river, he waited for several hours, after which he resumed his journey, ultimately reaching a grove on the outskirts of Kusi-nagara. His strength was rapidly failing, and becoming aware that death was near, he said to his disciple Ānanda:

"After I am gone tell Chunda that he will in a future birth receive very great reward; for, *having eaten of the food he gave me,*

<sup>1</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-7.

<sup>2</sup> *De Anim. Nat.*, XVI, 37.



*I am about to pass away. Say it was from my own mouth that you heard this. There are two gifts that will be blest above all others, that of Sujata before I attained Buddhahood under the Bo-Tree, and this gift of Chunda's before I finally pass away."*<sup>1</sup>

During Buddha's lifetime his cousin Dewadatta urged that mendicants should eat no meat, but Buddha said that the members of the Order "might eat whatever was customary in the countries where they were, so long as they ate without indulgence of the appetite". It was possible, he held, to become pure "whilst abstaining from flesh, or whilst using it".<sup>2</sup> Dewadatta was displeased and founded a stricter Order which was well supported, but although he died before Buddha, his teachings were not forgotten. The fact that Buddha himself died after eating pork was sufficient in itself to confirm the already existing prejudice against that flesh as food.

One of the many heretical Buddhist sects in northern India worshipped a pig goddess who was known as Marici or Varahi, "The Diamond Sow", "The Resplendent". This deity is known to the Tibetans as Od-zer 'c'an-ma.

"She was originally the queen of heaven, a Buddhist Ushas,<sup>3</sup> or goddess of the dawn, a metamorphosis of the sun as the centre of energy, curiously coupled with the oriental myth of the primæval productive pig. In another aspect she is a sort of Proserpine, the spouse of Yama, the Hindu Pluto, while in her fiercest mood she is the consort of the demon-general, 'the horse-necked Tamdin', a sort of demoniacal centaur; in another mode she is 'The adamantine sow' (Sanskrit, Vajra-vārāhi; Tibetan, r Do-rje P'ag-mo), who is believed to be incarnate in the abbess of the convent on the great Palti lake. . . . In her ordinary form she has three faces and eight hands, of which the left face is that of a

<sup>1</sup> T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, London, 1903, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-7.

<sup>3</sup> The Vedic goddess of Dawn.



sow. The hands hold various weapons, including an *araju*, axe and snare. She sits in 'the enchanting pose' upon a lotus throne, drawn by seven swine."

This pig goddess was evidently "taken over" by Buddhists from an earlier cult. At the same time it has to be recognized that the pig and certain other animals had a fundamental connexion with the Buddhist form of the doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls. In his former births Buddha was once a hare, once a dog, twice a pig, twice a frog, four times a serpent, eleven times a deer, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Boars were at one time sacrificed in India. In the *Mahābhārata*, it is told regarding the Eastern quarter:

"It was here that the smoke-eating *Munis* ate the smoke of sacrificial fires. It was in that region that myriads of boars and other animals were killed by Cakra (Indra) and offered as sacrificial portions unto the gods. It is here that the thousand-rayed Sun, arising, consumeth, out of ire, all those that are wicked and ungrateful among men and the *Asuras*. This is the gate of the three worlds. This is the path of heaven and of felicity. This quarter is called *Purva* (East)."<sup>2</sup>

We find the boar figuring as both a demon and a god in the Vedic hymns. As the god Indra slays the water-confining, dragon-serpent, Vritra, the god Trita slays the devil-boar:

"Trita, increasing through his strength, struck the boar with his iron-tipped shaft. Rising up, he has launched his arrow<sup>3</sup> against the malignant and destructive man. He, the noble and potent hero, has shattered for us the cities of the enemy (or of Nahush) in the conflict with the destroyers (*Dasyus*)."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir M. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, pp. 111 et seq., London, 1890 (second edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Udyoga Parva* (*Bhagavat Yana Parva*), Roy's translation, p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> Here again we have the arrow connected with the black Set boar.

<sup>4</sup> *Rigveda*, X, 99, 6-7

Professor Roth's view regarding Trita, who is called Aptya, is that he was "an ancient god superseded by Indra". He appears chiefly "in connexion with the Maruts, Vata or Vayu, and Indra". To him, as to these other deities, "combats with demons, Tvāshtra, Vritra, the Serpent, and others are ascribed. . . . His abode is conceived of as remote and hidden; hence arises the custom of wishing that evil may depart to him. He bestows long life. Several passages show the lower and certainly later view of Trita, that he fights with the demons under the guidance and protection of Indra, and thus leads to the conception of the rishi Trita."<sup>1</sup>

The god Rudra is called the "Boar of Heaven" in the *Rigveda*, and in later Hindu religious writings. Like Indra, he wielded the thunderbolt, and had bows and arrows, and his sons, the Rudras or Maruts, who "gleam like flames of fire" and "are clothed with rain", were followers of Indra. Rudra has also links with Agni, the fire god, apparently as the sender of lightning. He is also an angry slayer of men and beasts, a bringer and curer of disease ("the greatest of physicians"), and (perhaps because the boar is a raider of fields and devourer and destroyer of corn), "lord of thieves, the robber, the cheater, the deceiver".<sup>2</sup>

In the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* there is a reference to a creation myth in which the pig figured prominently. The earth is said to have been "raised by a black boar with a hundred arms".<sup>3</sup>

An allusion to the creation boar raising the earth, found in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, is as follows:

"She (the earth) was formerly so large . . . only so large, of the size of a span. Emūsha, a boar, raised her up."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, V, 336.

<sup>2</sup> Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV, pp. 393 *et seq.*, and V, pp. 147 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-8.



The boar is the creator god Brahmā in the *Rāmāyana*:

"All was water only, in which the earth was formed. Thence arose Brahmā, the self-existent, with the deities. He then, becoming a boar, raised up the earth, and created the whole earth with the saints, his sons."<sup>1</sup>

The boar form of the creator was subsequently transformed to the god Vishnu who had twenty-two incarnations.

"With a view to the creation of this universe, the lord of sacrifice (Vishnu), being desirous to raise up the earth, which had sunk into the lower regions, assumed the form of a boar."<sup>2</sup>

In the *Vishnu Purāna*, the creator, as Prajāpati, having taken the shapes of a fish, tortoise, &c., enters the body of a boar. The boar

"uttered a deep thunder sound. Then the great boar, with eyes like the expanded lotus, tossing up the earth with his tusk, rose up, resembling the leaf of the blue lotus, from the lower regions, like the great blue mountain. . . . The supreme Soul, the upholder of the earth, lifted the earth up quickly, and placed it upon the great waters."<sup>3</sup>

There is a reference to the sacrifice of the boar in the text:

"This boar, the plunderer of wealth, keeps the goods of the Asuras on the other side of seven hills. Kill him if thou art a slayer in a castle'. He (Indra), plucking up a bunch of Kusa grass, pierced through the seven hills, and slew him. He (Indra) then said: 'Thou hast said I am he who carries off from a castle; so carry him off.' He (Vishnu), the sacrifice, carried off the sacrifice for them (the gods)."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Wilson's *Vishnu Purāna* (2nd edition), Vol. I, pp. 63 et seq., for hymn to boar, and Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV, pp. 37-38.

<sup>4</sup> Muir, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 40.



The treatment of the pig in modern India is of special interest.

A Chadwar man of the Central Provinces, who has the pig for a totem, must not see anyone killing a pig. If he does, he breaks his crockery and has his house cleaned out as if a member of his family had died.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Edgar Thurston<sup>2</sup> tells that when cholera breaks out in a Khondh<sup>3</sup> village, "all males and females smear their bodies from head to foot with pig's fat liquefied by heat, and continue to do so until a few days after the disappearance of the dread disease".

If a Khondh man is killed by a tiger, "purification is made by the sacrifice of a pig". The head is cut off and "passed between the legs of the men of the village, who stand in a line astraddle". It is a bad omen if the head touches a man's legs. Mr. Thurston gives another account of this ceremony:

"The head of the decapitated pig is placed in a stream, and, as it floats down, it has to pass between the legs of the villagers. If it touches the legs of any of them it forebodes that he will be killed by a tiger."<sup>4</sup>

Bishop Whitehead has recorded a quaint omen.<sup>5</sup>

"At a certain village, when a pig is sacrificed to the village goddess Angalamman, its neck is first cut slightly, and the blood allowed to flow on to some boiled rice placed on a plantain leaf, and then the rice soaked in its own blood is given to the pig to eat. If the pig eats it, the omen is good, if not, the omen is bad; but, in any case, the pig has its head cut off by the *pājāri* (priest)."<sup>6</sup>

The Savaras of Vizagapatam sacrifice the pig.<sup>7</sup> When

<sup>1</sup> *Central Provinces, Ethnographic Survey*, VII, Allahabad, 1911, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Omens and Superstitions of Southern India*, London, 1912, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> A Dravidian people of Bengal and Madras.

<sup>4</sup> *Madras Museum Bull.*, 1907, V, No 3, 173.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Thurston, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

a Savara of Ganjam is killed by a tiger two pigs are sacrificed outside the village "and every man, woman and child is made to walk over the ground where the pigs' blood is spilled".<sup>1</sup>

Among the Khondhs pork is forbidden to women.<sup>2</sup> A fattened pig is sacrificed to the sun by crushing it to death. The tail and testicles are removed and the flesh is then eaten.<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Whitehead<sup>4</sup> has recorded in connexion with the sacrifices, &c., in the Telugu country that "sometimes, when there is a cattle disease, a pig is buried up to its neck at the boundary of the village, a heap of boiled rice is deposited near the spot, and then all the cattle of the village are driven over the head of the unhappy pig. . . . When I was on tour in the Kurnool District, an old man described to me the account he had received from his 'forefathers' of the ceremonies observed when founding a new village. An auspicious site is selected on an auspicious day, and then, in the centre of the site, is dug a large hole, in which are placed five different kinds of grains, small pieces of the five metals, and a large stone called *boddu-rayée* (navel stone), standing about three and a half feet above the ground, very like the ordinary boundary stones seen in the fields. Then, at the entrance of the village, in the centre of the main street, where most of the cattle pass in and out on their way to and from the fields, they dig another hole and bury a pig alive." The Bishop suggests that the burying of the pig may have been connected with the worship of an agricultural goddess, or a survival of human sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Thurston, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> S. C. Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India*, London, 1865, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Fraser, *Folklore in the Old Testament*, Vol. III, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Madras Museum Bull.*, 1907, V, 3, 137, 186, and Thurston, *op. cit.*, p. 211



Fortune-telling Korava women use grains of rice and a winnowing fan, and carry a wicker tray "in which cowry shells are embedded in a mixture of cow-dung and turmeric". The cowries represent the goddess Pōtēramma and the women carry also a basket which represents the goddess Kolapuriamma. When a girl is initiated into the profession of fortune-telling she is blindfolded and she must swallow morsels of a mixture of boiled rice, green grain, and the blood of a black fowl, a black pig, and a black goat, which have been killed for the ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

When the Khonds sacrificed a human being to the "earth goddess", named Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu, so as to procure from her good crops and immunity from disease and accidents, a pig was sacrificed also. The pig's blood was allowed "to flow into a pit prepared for the purpose". Then the human victim was thrown in and "his face pressed down" until he was "suffocated in the bloody mire amid the noise of instruments". Pieces of his flesh were cut off and buried near a brass effigy of a peacock, a form of the deity which the Māliahs of Goomsur called Thadda Pennoo, and the village deity called Zakaree Pennoo who was represented by three stones. The brass effigy of the peacock was buried near the stones. When the dancing worshippers took part in the barbarous rite, they cried out, "Oh! god, we offer the sacrifice to you. Give us good crops, seasons and health."<sup>2</sup>

In times of drought the Koyis of the Godāvāri district hold a festival which is dedicated to Bhima, one of the Pandava heroes of the *Mahābhārata*. When rain falls a cow and a pig are sacrificed to Bhima. When Brahmans

<sup>1</sup> *Madras Census Report*, 1901, Part I, 164, and Thurston, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, No. V, and Thurston, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-201.



walk round the village with an image of the god Varuna the ceremony is considered to be more efficacious. Another favoured rite is to pour a thousand pots of water over the lingam in the temple of Shiva.<sup>1</sup>

The fruits of the earth, it was believed over wide areas, would be injured by illicit love affairs. The Karens of Burmah, whenever adultery or fornication is detected, compel the offenders to procure and sacrifice a pig. Blood is poured on furrowed earth, and prayers offered up that the crops may not fail.<sup>2</sup>

In the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, it is believed that the fat of pigs melted and poured over the body of a boy at puberty produces strength. The same effect may be obtained by mere pressure of the animal on the person's body.<sup>3</sup>

From India we pass to Mesopotamia where the pig figured prominently in religion in ancient times.

Sir James Frazer<sup>4</sup> shows that there are many points of resemblance between Osiris of Egypt, the Syrian Adonis, and the Phrygian Attis. According to Jastrow, Adonis was a form of the Sumero-Babylonian god Tammuz<sup>5</sup> who appears to have had a pig form. The Rev. Charles J. Ball regards Tammuz as a swine god, and shows that his ancient name survives almost unchanged in Turkish, meaning "a pig".<sup>6</sup>

Sucking pigs, as well as white kids, were sacrificed to Tammuz. Like Adonis, he may have been, in a lost myth, slain by a boar—a seasonal boar-god. The Babylonian god Ninib was, as Ber, "lord of the wild boar", an animal which was also associated with the Semitic

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer of the Godavari District*, 1907, I, 47, and Thurston, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

<sup>2</sup> F. Mason, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, XXXVII, Part II, pp. 147 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> E. H. Man, *Journ. Anthropol. Institute*, XII (1883), p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> *The Golden Bough* (Adonis, Attis, Osiris, *The Dying God and Spirits of the Corn and Wild*).

<sup>5</sup> Jastrow, *Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 324.

<sup>6</sup> *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, Vol. XVI, pp. 195 et seq.

god Rimmon, a form of Adad who links with the Hittite god Tarku.<sup>1</sup>

Ninib (also read Ninip and Nirig) was worshipped from very early times at Nippur and was associated with Enlil, the bull god, storm god, mountain god, lord of heaven and earth, &c. Jastrow considers there are reasons for believing that Ninib was an earlier Nippur deity than Enlil, and asks, "Was he worshipped there before the Sumerians brought their mountain god to the Euphrates valley?"<sup>2</sup> He was a storm god, and resembled the Egyptian Set, the slayer of Osiris, who appears to have originally been identified with the fierce storm winds (the *Khamáseen* and *Samoom*) which blow from the south (the original cardinal point of Set) before the inundation of the Nile which was supposed to be caused by the killing of Osiris—Osiris being the "new water" or giver of the new water, as the "water-confiner".

Jeremias identifies Ninib, as Ninshah, with the boar-god who kills Tammuz, as Amyntor (Mars-Ninib) in his boar form kills Adonis, and he reminds us that *Ἀγχαῖος*, one of the argonauts and a vine-keeper, is killed at the summer solstice by a boar; he also notes, in this connexion, that "among the Siamese a giant changed into a boar kills the god of day", and that "in the Scandinavian fable Odin is wounded by a boar", and that "from the drops of blood grow the spring flowers".

The summer solstice was the festival of the death of Tammuz and, as Jeremias reminds us, "it is brought about by a boar, the beast of Ninib-Mars, to whom the sun-point of the solar orbit belongs". In a note he adds, "The month of Tammuz belongs to Ninib, and the

<sup>1</sup> Sayce, *Religion of the Ancient Babylonians*, p. 133, n. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 76.



ibex is sacred to him. According to a Syrian tradition, Tammuz is a hunter and poacher".<sup>1</sup>

The Babylonians ate pork and kept pigs even at temples as far back as the Hammurabi period. They offered pork to the gods. Omens were read on pig's livers.

Images of pigs were found during recent excavations at Kish and Ur, and these appear to testify to the antiquity of pig worship in Sumeria.

A very remarkable Assyrian cuneiform inscription describes the ridding of a possessed man by means of a pig. The heart and blood of the pig were, it appears, applied to the sufferer, and its flesh was cut up and divided over the man's limbs with incantations which made the animal a "scape-pig".<sup>2</sup>

The Assyrian pig taboo is of special interest. It is set forth in a text that "if a man eats flesh of swine on the 30th of Ab (i.e. when the moon is invisible), boils will break out upon him, or if he eats swine or oxen on the 27th of Tisri various things will happen to him".<sup>3</sup>

The scape-pig is referred to on a British Museum tablet (K. 6172) which says, "Sacrifice a pig before Šamās (and) thou shalt imprison their sorceries in the body of the pig."<sup>4</sup>

A cuneiform tablet in the British Museum deals "with omens derived from the actions of pigs".

The wild boar is an inhabitant of Assyrian lands, but it is very rarely represented on the ancient monuments. A slab in the British Museum has a picture of a wild sow with piglets in a marsh and near by are three deer.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. Jeremias, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, London (trans.), 1911, Vol. I, pp. 96 et seq., and 141.

<sup>2</sup> R. Campbell Thompson, *Semitic Magic*, London, 1908, pp. 208-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 209-210. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>5</sup> W. Houghton, *Trans. Soc. Biblical Archaeology*, Vol. V (1877), p. 351.



Pig's gall, blood and dung occur in the Assyrian medical texts.<sup>1</sup>

Layard found that the pork taboo was prevalent among the Yezidis of Mesopotamia. "Pork is unlawful; but not wine, which is drunk by all," he wrote. Although nominally Moslems, this people had non-Moslem and even Christian beliefs and they revered the sun and fire; they passed their hands through flames, kissed them, and rubbed the right eyebrow, or the whole face. They turned the faces of their dead towards "that part of the heavens in which the sun rises". Apparently the Yezidis, like the Sabæans, perpetuated ancient Assyrian and Babylonian religious beliefs and customs".<sup>2</sup>

The Yezidis say that "the spirits of wicked men take up their abode in dogs, pigs, donkeys, horses, or, after suffering a while, rehabilitate as men".<sup>3</sup>

At Harran pigs were sacrificed once a year, when their flesh was eaten. Strabo (IX, 5, 17) says that in Syria pigs were sacrificed to Aphrodite.

Lucian in his *De Dea Syria* (chap. 54) says of the Galli:

"They sacrifice bulls and cows alike and goats and sheep; pigs alone, which they abominate, are neither sacrificed nor eaten. Others look on swine without disgust, but as holy animals."<sup>4</sup>

Sir William Ramsay deals with the sanctity and abhorrence of the pig, and shows that the Halys river "divided these two points of view".<sup>5</sup>

The Jewish prejudice against the pig and pork is well known.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Campbell Thompson, *Proc. Royal Soc. of Medicine (Hist. Sec.)*, Vol. XVII, 5, 12, 27 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> A. H. Layard, *Discoveries at Nineveh*, London, 1856, pp. 133-191.

<sup>3</sup> R. Campbell Thompson, *Semitic Magic*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> H. A. Strong and J. Garstang, *The Syrian Goddess*, London, 1913, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> *Hist. Geog. of Asia Minor*, p. 32, and *The Syrian Goddess*, p. 85, note 65.

<sup>6</sup> See Lev. xi, 7; Deut. xiv, 8; Isaiah, lvi, 4, and lvi, 3, 17; Prov. xi, 22; Matt. vii, 6; 2 Peter, ii, 22.

In the Aegean area the pig deities appear to have been introduced with the agricultural mode of life. A star-spangled sow and terra-cotta vessels of pig form were found by Schliemann at Troy.<sup>1</sup>

According to one of the Aegean cults, the god Zeus was suckled by a sow in the cave of Mount Ida in Crete. Other cults favoured the goat and horned sheep as the Roman cult favoured the wolf which suckled Romulus and Remus. Because Zeus was suckled by a sow,

"all the Cretans consider this animal sacred, and will not taste of its flesh; and the men of Prasos perform sacred rites with the sow, making her the first offering at the sacrifice."<sup>2</sup>

Sir James Frazer, quoting Strabo (XII, 8, 9) notes that "at Comana in Pontus, the seat of the worship of the goddess Ma, pork was not eaten and swine might not even be brought into the city".

It has been suggested by Sir James Frazer<sup>3</sup> that the Greek goddess Demeter had originally a sow form. Farnell reminds us, however, that "no Greek legend or ritual reveals any sense of the identity between Demeter and the pig".<sup>4</sup> Bulls, cows and pigs were sacrificed to Demeter, and Farnell's view in this connexion is that "the pig is the victim specially consecrated to the powers of the lower world".<sup>5</sup> At Potinæ in Bæotia "a sucking pig was thrown into an underground megaron as an offering to Demeter and Kore".<sup>6</sup> A similar rite was performed in Attic Thesmophoria, where women descended to bring up the decaying remnants and offer them grain to bring an abundant harvest.<sup>7</sup> Sucking pigs were offered to Demeter and Kore at Potinæ.<sup>8</sup> Farnell draws attention to a sacrificial relief in the Acropolis

<sup>1</sup> H. Schliemann, *Troy and Its Remains* (trans.), London, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. I, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*.

<sup>4</sup> *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. III, p. 91.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.    <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 89.    <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 90.



Museum at Athens which is "interesting because of its antiquity", for "it belongs to the middle period of Archaism". He describes it as follows:

"On the right are represented male and female worshippers, then a boy holding a patera and leading a pig to Demeter, who stands on the left with a spray in her hand and wearing a crown probably of corn ears."<sup>1</sup>

Farnell also notes that numerous terra-cottas found at Camarina "represent a hieratic form of Demeter holding the pig, sometimes a torch, and in one instance the pomegranate". He considers that "the intention was to depict the Chthonian goddess by means of these attributes". Another series found near Catania with dedications to Demeter and Persephone represent these deities with torch, pomegranate and pig.<sup>2</sup>

The pig was connected with Aphrodite and at the Eleusinian Mysteries, which were celebrated at full moon, each candidate came with a young pig which he bathed in the sea. "When Eleusis was permitted (350-327 B.C.) to issue her autonomous coinage it is the pig she chooses as the sign and symbol of her mysteries."<sup>3</sup>

Farnell refers to an archaic seated figure of Aphrodite of gold and ivory in a temple at Sicyon which only priestesses and their attendant maidens were allowed to enter, and says:

"The ritual in one detail at least points to the East; the pig was a sacred animal in the Sicyonic cult, too sacred to be offered."<sup>4</sup>

Strabo (IX, 5, 17) says pigs were sacrificed to Aphrodite at Argos and in Pamphylia.

The fig. in Plate opposite is from an Attic vase found

<sup>1</sup> *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. III, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 221.

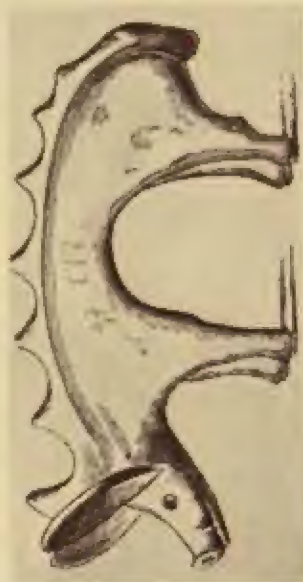
<sup>3</sup> Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 152-3, and Elliot Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. II, p. 679.





Greek boar sacrifice on Attic vase dated c. 500 B.C. The boar is being driven to altar by the sacrificer, who is followed by a man playing the double pipe and two citizens carrying floral emblems.



Boar from Celtic armour found in South-Eastern England. Tacitus tells us that the Baltic amber traders of Celtic speech believed the boar mascot protected them in battle.



Boar from Celtic armour found among Iron Age relics in South-Eastern England.

## THE BOAR IN GREEK AND CELTIC LEGEND



in the Tanagra district, and published and described by Leschke.<sup>1</sup>

The vase dates from the early sixth or late fifth century B.C., and this is one of the three panels illustrating one of the Dionysiac festivals of Greece. A pig is being driven towards a four-cornered stone altar from which arise flames in spiral form, and curiously resembling the conventionalized Assyrian "Tree of Life". The attendant on the altar immediately behind the pig, wears an apron and carries a flat sacrificial basket from which dangles an object twisted like a rope. Then comes a musician playing the double pipe which was common to Greece and Egypt. Behind him are "distinguished citizens", carrying branches and flowers. The piper and citizens, who are bearded like the attendant, wear long chitons and cloaks.

Dionysos was the Zeus of Crete who was suckled by a sow in the cave of Mount Ida. He was also the Roman Bacchus, and his prototype was the Egyptian Osiris as a wine god. Athens was the chief centre of the festivals in honour of the god, and the years were numbered by their celebration. A sacred vessel of wine or holy water, a basket of figs and a vine branch were usually carried at a festival. At first the festivals were simple, but ultimately they became very elaborate, and scenes of shocking debauchery. At one "dionysia" human beings were sacrificed.

J. G. Lawson<sup>2</sup> has found the pork taboo surviving among the people of northern Arcadia in Greece. "The flesh of the pig," he writes, "is taboo, and the result of eating it is said to be leprosy." He suggests that the origin of the modern Arcadian prejudice against pork

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Zeit.*, 1881. Taf. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, Cambridge, 1910, pp. 87, 325.



"may well be sought in the ritual observances of the old cult of Demeter and her daughter, to whom the pig was sacred and in whose honour it was sacrificed once only in each year, at the festival of the Thesmophoria. . . . The Thesmophoria resembled this (annual) Egyptian (pig) festival in that it was an annual occasion for sacrificing pigs and for partaking therefore of their flesh; if then the worshippers of Demeter, like the Egyptians, were forbidden to use the pig for food at other times, and if the penalty for disobedience in Greece too was believed to be leprosy, the present case of taboo in Arcadia—the only one known to me in modern Greece—may be a survival from the ancient cult."

A Serbian custom, connected originally with the worship of the goddess Colleda, is to make cakes in the form of the pig, and also to eat pork at Christmas.<sup>1</sup>

Through Europe the boar or sow figured as what Sir J. G. Frazer calls "the embodiment of the corn spirit", as did also, however, the wolf or dog, the cock, the hare, the cat, the goat, the bull or cow, the horse or mare, the fox, &c.<sup>2</sup>

As I have shown<sup>3</sup> it is not, however, till we come to Scotland that we find the pig an "abomination", and pork tabooed as in Arcadia, Syria and Palestine. Thousands of Scottish Highlanders still refuse to keep pigs or eat pork.

There is, outside Ulster, where the prejudice against pork lingers in families, no trace of the pork taboo in Ireland. Miss Eleanor Hull<sup>4</sup> has, however, shown that there is a good deal of Irish lore regarding "enchanted swine" which were "transformed human beings". When the black "pigs of magic" came out of the cave of Cruachan the land they went round became

<sup>1</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (3rd edition), (*Balder the Beautiful*), Vol. I, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, Vol. I, pp. 305 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> *Scottish Pork Taboo* (Memoirs and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, Vol. LXVI, 1922).

<sup>4</sup> *Folk Lore*, 1918.

barren for seven years; "neither corn nor grass nor leaf would grow through it".

In Wales the "black sow of All Hallows" was, as Sir John Rhys once said to me, "the very devil".<sup>1</sup> No trace of a pork taboo has survived in Wales or England.

Moslems taboo pork because in the *Koran* (chapter entitled "The Cow") it is set forth:

"Verily He (God) hath forbidden you to eat that which dieth of itself, and blood and swine's flesh."

Sale writes regarding the Arabian taboo:

"Swine's flesh the old Arabs seem not to have eaten; and their prophet, in prohibiting the same, appears to have only confirmed the common aversion of the nation."<sup>2</sup>

Certain sinners after death assume pig forms.<sup>3</sup>

According to Pliny no species of swine was to be found in his time in Arabia. Mr. Warren R. Dawson tells me, however, that Ibn el-Beithan (twelfth century A.D.) mentions the pig amongst materia medica. Pig's gall was supposed to be good for alopecia.

The diffusion of the prejudice against pork in certain areas is due to the teaching of the *Koran*. Moslems in various countries may be descendants of people to whom the pig was not an abomination.

The Celts did not taboo pork, being, in fact, in ancient times the pork merchants of Europe.<sup>4</sup> We learn from Pausanias (1, 3, § 5), however, that the Celts of Asia ceased to eat pork after they became converts to the cult of the god Attis:

"Attis himself and several of the Lydians were slain by the

<sup>1</sup> See also Sir John's *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx*, Vol. I, pp. 225-6.

<sup>2</sup> *The Koran* (Introduction), pp. 99-100.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Strabo, IV, c. 4, § 3.



boar, in consequence of which the Galatæ (Celts) who dwell in Pessinus will not eat swine."

The Buddhists also caused the diffusion of the prejudice against pork because Buddha died after eating of swine's flesh.

It may well be that the ancient Egyptians were similarly responsible for the Syrian prejudice against pigs referred to by Lucian. One section sacrificed pigs; another section regarded the pig as an abomination.

According to Herodotus the Egyptians regarded the pig as an "impure beast", and swineherds were not allowed to enter a temple. Once a year the pig was sacrificed to Osiris and the moon. Pigs were kept to tread in grain at sowing time, and at harvest time to tread out the corn during threshing operations.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Warren R. Dawson has shown, however, that the Egyptians kept pigs as far back as Pyramid times, and that the pig was used in medicine and magic. He considers, in the light of the evidence he has reviewed, that the statement about the pig being an "impure beast" in Egypt is "too sweeping a generalization". Swine were bred by some farmers and pork was eaten. Mr. Dawson is of opinion that in Egypt "customs varied in different localities and at different periods".<sup>2</sup>

It was not until after the Hyksos period that pigs supplanted sheep to tread in the grain in Egypt. This custom may have come from the Delta where Isis had a sow form and Osiris may have had a boar form, as Sir J. G. Frazer suggests.

Set, the slayer of Osiris, had become after the Hyksos period a dangerous god, perhaps because he had been identified with the Hyksos god Sutekh. Breasted shows

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, II, 14, 47, 48.

<sup>2</sup> *The Pig in Ancient Egypt* (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, July, 1928), pp. 597 et seq.



that during the Pyramid Age Set had been "king of the South on equal terms with Horus as king of the North".<sup>1</sup>

During the Empire Period (following upon the expulsion of the Hyksos) Set was identified with the black pig and was regarded as a devil. The sacrifice of swine to Horus was forbidden, and a myth, included in the "Book of the Dead" tells that the North was given to Horus by the sun god Re as compensation for the injury done to Horus by Set. A myth tells that Re directed the attention of Horus to the black pig, and Horus, having gazed at it, lost the sight of one of his eyes. It was then declared by Re that in future the pig will be an abomination to Horus.

Pigs were reared in large numbers by the Christian Nubians. When in 1173 Tūrān Shāh, the elder brother of Saladin, invaded Nubia and destroyed the town of Ibrim, burning the church, about 700 pigs were killed, "being regarded as unclean animals by the Muslims".<sup>2</sup>

According to Lane the Copts dislike the flesh of the domestic pig, the animal being a filthy one. They do not consider the pork diet "unlawful" and eat the flesh of the wild boar.<sup>3</sup>

Until recently pork was tabooed among tribes in Central East Africa as Roscoe and others have found.

Sir J. G. Frazer gives instances of the pork taboo among the Creeks, Cherokee, and kindred tribes of North American Indians, and the Caribs of South America. The pig being a "heavy, wallowing" animal, its flesh might transfuse its qualities to human beings. Caribs abstain from swine's flesh lest they should have small eyes like pigs.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Breasted, *Religion in Thought*, pp. 25 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> E. A. Wallis Budge, *A History of Ethiopia*, London, 1928, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (Everyman), pp. 97 and 547.

<sup>4</sup> *Spirits of the Corn and Wild*, Vol. II, pp. 139-140.

The pig was the usual subject for anatomical teaching in mediæval times. Mr. Warren R. Dawson draws my attention in this connexion to the fact that there is an early work of the Salerno school, of which several manuscripts are known, called *Anatomia Porci*, attributed to Copho. This work has been edited by George W. Corner, M.D. (*Anatomical Texts of the Earlier Middle Ages*, Washington, 1927, pp. 48 *et seq.*). In the School of Salerno (eleventh to twelfth centuries, A.D.) "anatomy was studied practically, but was confined to zootomy, in particular to the inspection of the viscera of swine".<sup>1</sup>

The evidence given above regarding the religious and magico-religious treatment of the pig over so wide an area of the ancient world could be greatly extended and given in more detail. It is sufficient, however, to emphasize that in Melanesia and Indonesia (and, apparently, in America as well) the beliefs and customs connected with the pig were acquired with much else, including the agricultural-horticultural mode of life, from centres of ancient civilization. The pig, both in ancient Egypt and ancient Mesopotamia, had, before it "set out on its travels", become incorporated in highly complex religious systems and connected with the sky deities on the one hand and the underworld deities on the other.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Max Neuberges, *History of Medicine* (English translation by Dr. Ernest Playfair), Oxford, Vol. II, Part I, p 26.



Photo by H. C. Chapman

# BOAR AMONG SACRED ANIMALS

Relief above entrance to Norman church at Paywiche, Derby.





## CHAPTER XV

### New Guinea Complexes

New Guinea and Its Peoples—Hebraic Types of Lake Murray Area—Melancsians—The Pygmies—Stone and Sun Worship—Fear of Frogs, Lizards and Snakes—Sun-arresting Ceremony—Sacred Stone Circles—Village Council at Circle—Homeric Circle as Assembly Place—Squatting Stones—Symbols on Stones—Snake Stone—Cannibal Feasts at Stone Circles—Stone Totems—The "Rocking Stone"—Culture Hero becomes a Stone—Kiwai Megaliths—"Living Stones"—The Giant Octopus—Sacred Tree—The First Parents—Sky-separation Myth—The Sky-world—Ceremonial Dances—Animals with Souls—Spirit Roasting—Sea Spirits—Noseless Ghosts and Nose-boring Custom—Nose Swallowers—Causes of Illness and Death—Tribal Groupings—Fishers and Agriculturists—Eel and Snake Deities—A Dragon God—Mummification—Images of the Dead—Masks—Traces of Archaic Civilization—Cultural Influences from Indonesia.

The great island of New Guinea is also called Papua, a rendering of the Malay word *papuwah*, originally applied to its inhabitants and meaning "woolly", or "fuzzy-headed". It is, next to Australia, the largest island in the world, being about 1490 miles long and from less than 100 to about 400 miles broad. New Guinea lies south of the equator, forming a barrier between Southern Indonesia and the islands of the Pacific. The three historic migrations of Polynesia passed to the north of it, but cultural influences were always "flowing" like the tides through the Torres Straits, which separate New Guinea from northern Queensland, Australia. It would appear, too, that the Melanesian migrations followed this southern route.

The great island, which embraces about 308,000 square miles, was before the Great War divided into three parts—Dutch New Guinea, extending to about 150,000 square miles; British New Guinea, about 90,000 square miles; and German New Guinea, about 70,000 square miles. Now there is no German area, and the British comprises about 160,000 square miles.

Great mountain ranges run from west to east of the island, and towards the south-east is the lofty Nassau Range (also called "Snowy Mountains") with peaks rising to altitudes from 14,764 to 15,964 feet and covered with eternal glaciers. The island has a great wealth of tropical products and mineral resources. Its fauna includes the famous "birds of paradise", and its flora is copious and often distinctive. There are a number of rivers, some being impressively large.

The Papuans are, as a rule, tall and well built, with "fuzzy" hair, and skins varying in shade from a chocolate brown to a "rusty black". They have scanty facial hair. Mr. A. F. R. Wollaston writes of them:

"The most characteristic feature is the nose, which is long and fleshy and somewhat 'Semitic' in outline, but flattened and depressed at the tip. But these characteristics of the nose would not alone suffice to distinguish the Papuans from others were it not for the fact that the *alæ nasi* are attached at a remarkably high level on the face, and so an unusually large extent of the *septum* of the nose is exposed. It is owing to the curious formation of the nose that the Papuan is enabled to perform his almost universal practice of piercing the *septum nasi* and wearing there some ornament of bone or shell."<sup>1</sup>

A people of Semitic type, whom he has referred to as "The Lost Tribe", was discovered by Captain Frank Hurley when he and his party sailed up the Fish River

<sup>1</sup> A. F. R. Wollaston, *Pygmies and Papuans*, London, 1912, p. 26.



in the *Eureka* and were the first white men to reach "the vast steaming swamp about Lake Murray". The estuary of the Fish River is about 40 miles wide, and the river itself is between 500 and 600 miles in length. Lake Murray is connected with it by a tributary and lies about 200 miles inland. Hurley's description of this uncharted lake is worth quoting:

"Its extreme length must be at least fifteen or twenty miles, with a width of four to five miles. The water, though hot (90 degrees), is remarkably pure and, save for occasional clumps of lotuses and reeds on areas of less than one fathom in depth, is clear and open. The banks are covered with long grass and reeds, which make the shore line appear deceptively close at hand. Investigation showed that these reeds grew far out into the lake, sometimes in a fathom or more of water. . . . The course took us towards the western end of the lake amid scenery of indescribable beauty. Here the waters were virgin, never before entered by a white man. . . . Everywhere along the borders of the shore there appeared clumps covering acres of gigantic lotuses all in full blossom. . . . Many were nearly a foot in diameter and of a bewildering beauty. . . . These lovely blossoms have a sweet perfume which they exhale strongly at sundown."<sup>1</sup>

The natives have voices which are "pleasantly euphonious" and "most amazing features". Hurley writes:

"The cast of features of these people is amazingly Hebraic. Indeed, were it not for the deep bronze of their skins, they might have passed for one of the Lost Tribes. They coincided accurately with historians' description of the lost tribes of Israel and might well pass for Babylonian Jews. The hair is shorn off close in the front; but the back extends in a long cluster of luxuriant pigtaails which are increased in length by plaiting them with fibre."

Further on Captain Hurley says:

<sup>1</sup> Frank Hurley, *Pearls and Savages*, London, 1924, pp. 284 et seq.

"Most of them were of a markedly Semitic type, while others resembled early Egyptians, an impression imparted doubtless by the strange manner of dressing the hair. The chief was decidedly an aristocratic and kingly type; with his crown of paradise plumes he might well have passed for a reincarnation of Solomon. Then there was Shylock typified; and to judge from his voracious expression he would require more than a mere pound of flesh."<sup>1</sup>

The pure type of Papuans is commonest in Dutch New Guinea. In British (including old German) New Guinea are mixed types, including communities speaking dialects of the Melanesian language. These are referred to as Papuo-Melanesians.

But the Papuans do not appear to have been the aborigines displaced in parts by Melanesian and even Polynesian types.

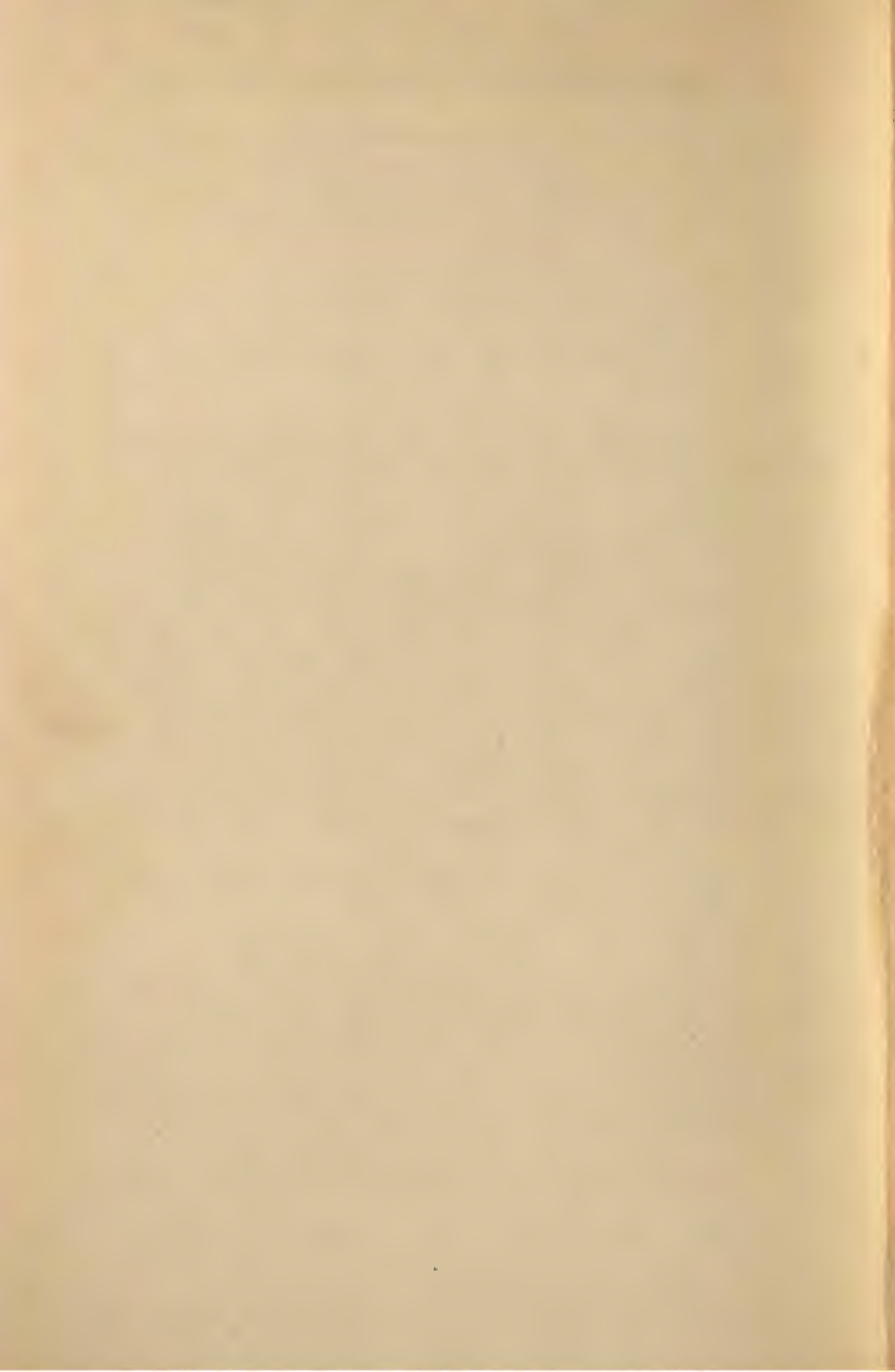
In the interior of Dutch New Guinea, living in upland villages, are pygmies—that is, a people below 4 feet 11 inches in height. They are of Negrito type with woolly hair and dark skins, resembling, as Dr. A. C. Haddon has shown, the pygmies of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, the southern portion of the Malay Peninsula and the Philippines. In British New Guinea, among the Nafulu mountain people, are tribes which are mixtures of Negritoes, Papuans, and Papuo-Melanesians. Bones of small peoples found in the Admiralty Islands and New Britain indicate that negritoes reached some of the smaller Pacific islands, but they may have been the slaves of the pioneer explorers and settlers. The Negritoes are hunters who never cultivate the soil, as do the Papuans and Melanesians, "unless", Dr. Haddon says, "they have been modified by contact with more advanced peoples". Little is known regarding these Negritoes, but their social organization appears to be of very simple

<sup>1</sup> Frank Hurley, *op. cit.*, pp. 400 and 410.



LATAKOI OR MOTU TRADING VESSEL UNDER SAIL, NEW GUINEA





character. They do not tattoo or disfigure their bodies or use the nose-stick.<sup>1</sup>

Traces of intermixture of Melanesian types with the pygmies was detected in the "eighties" of last century by the Rev. James Chalmers, the pioneer missionary. He found the cannibals in Orokolo good and kindly. "They are small in stature," he wrote, "some of the women being remarkably so. In Namau he found the swamp-dwellers had their native virtues:

"The women certainly do not wear much, and I am not astonished at it. They are very modest, and think themselves respectably and well clothed. Why savages should be always spoken of as immoral I fail to see. They are not so when compared with the more highly civilized countries of the world. I am sorry to have to say that it is contact with the civilized white that demoralizes them, and they then become loose and immoral."<sup>2</sup>

The love of children among the Motu people is commented upon by Mr. Chalmers. He tells of the sorrow of a grandfather over a grandchild who died. He had taken the child with him on a trip. "I thought it would comfort us when away from home and friends," he said, "to have my pet grandchild with us; you know it is so lonely."<sup>3</sup>

When revisiting a native, Mr. Chalmers found him lamenting the death of a son. "Had you only come sooner," wailed the man, "come before my darling son died, he might have lived; but you come long after to weep only at his grave. Oh! my son, my son, I shall never see you again. Why did you die? Why leave me so?"<sup>4</sup>

In Motu (the district around Port Moresby) and

<sup>1</sup> *Pygmies and Papuans*, London, 1912, Appendix B, pp. 303 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> James Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, London, 1887, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

Motumotu (Elema region) of old British New Guinea, there is evidence of stone and sun worship. The Motumotu worshipped a spirit named Semese and his two sons as well as "the sun, moon, stones, rocks, and mountains", while they worshipped also dead warriors "in a small degree". Certain stones in the river were "very sacred". The sun was worshipped "at certain seasons". Mr. Chalmers<sup>1</sup> was told by the natives regarding sun-worship:

"They will sit up all night dressed in their finest, and when near sunrise will watch intently, and as soon as the sun is seen they bend their heads as if ashamed to look up and pray to it. When it is well up they leave off. The sun has many wives and very large plantations, and is full of all knowledge. All the people who live near the rising sun are also full of wisdom, as the people of Mekto, over whom the sun rises, who make fine net bags and other things very well. The moon is also worshipped as the sun, but the stars are not."

The Motu people do not worship stones and the sun, but

"they have round pebbles brought from near Orokolo in the west, and they use them when planting bananas and yams. They sprinkle water over the stones upon the article to be planted."

In this respect they resemble the southern Mexicans who, according to the early Spanish Christian missionaries, believed that small green stones gave them food and drink as well as success and prosperity. The Mexicans sometimes carved the stones to resemble frogs, and Mr. Chalmers found the Motuans "afraid of frogs (*honga*), as they believe them to be spirits". If frogs entered a house "they came to tell of death, or to warn the inhabitants". Lizards and snakes were also sacred

<sup>1</sup> James Chalmers, *op. cit.*, pp. 162 et seq.



and feared by the Motu people, but not by the Motu-motu people.

Both these peoples were found by Mr. Chalmers to believe in the sun being delayed in its course. The Motu told him:

"When hunting or travelling late in the afternoon, afraid to be overtaken by darkness, sometimes a man will take a piece of twine, loop it, look through it at the sun, and pray; then run it into a knot saying, 'Wait until we get home, and we will give you the fat of a pig'. He passes the string to the next behind, and then it is thrown away."

By the Motumotu he was informed:

"When travelling and afraid of the sun setting before getting to a journey's end (a man) will say, 'Sun, do not be in a hurry; just wait until I get to the end.' And the sun waits. They do not like eating at night; and if the food is late in cooking and the sun sinking, they will say, 'Sun, stop; my food is not ready, and I want to eat by you'."

In Polynesian myth the hero Maui has ropes made to snare the sun because it travelled too quickly across the sky. "Let us," he said, "now catch the sun in a noose, so that we may compel him to move more slowly, in order that mankind may have long days to labour in to procure subsistence for themselves."<sup>1</sup>

A glimpse of ancient customs connected with sacred stones was obtained by Mr. Chalmers during one of his long inland tramps in eastern New Guinea in 1878. The party, which included natives, reached the village of Barogofigofi, about 900 feet above sea-level, and observed local customs:

"We entered without speaking a word, marched through the village to a circle of stones, on which a number of men were

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Grey, *Polynesian Mythology*, Chapter II.

sitting, and went round and round them in silence, until a man, who turned out afterwards to be the chief, sprang out, followed by the others, who rushed to a house near, seized their spears and clubs, whilst we were told by Quaiani to go on to the stone circle and not to fear, he going to the centre of the village. They then danced round him, rushing on him as if to spear him, and some with their clubs as if to club him. . . .

"After some time the old man came and took a tomahawk from his bag and threw it down in front, followed by Berige, who carried several pieces of hoop iron, which were placed on the tomahawk. All were picked up and carried away, when an old woman came to Quaiani, threw her arms round him, and they both wept together. Then another woman, followed by men, did the same. When finished, the old man danced around and said, 'Here are great foreign chiefs come to see you, and here am I with a number of my people. It is now peace; and let it remain so.'"<sup>1</sup>

One is reminded in this connexion of Homer's references to the elders sitting on stone seats within or beside stone circles. When Odysseus was on the island of Scheria, he visited the "assembly place" where the elders sat on dressed stones within a stone circle. There he was presented to the people and ceremonial games were held. On that scene on the shield of Achilles which depicted an assembly place, the poet tells of the assembly place of a city where the elders sat on dressed stones in "the sacred circle", to hear evidence regarding a dispute between two men.<sup>2</sup>

It is known that in historic times there were assemblies at stone circles in Scotland, and apparently the custom was, as the Homeric evidence testifies, of considerable antiquity; its widespread distribution is indicated by Mr. Chalmers's evidence from New Guinea.

<sup>1</sup> J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, pp. 144, 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey*, VIII and VI, 267; *Iliad*, XVIII, 497.



At Perau, on the west bank of the Annie River, Mr. Chalmers "saw two idols and a large peculiarly shaped stone". The idols were called "Epe and Kivava" and the stone's name was "Ravai", and they were kept in the sacred house reserved for men known as the "dubu". Mr. Chalmers writes of them:

"Offerings are made to them, and in cases of sickness they are often appealed to, seeing that Kanitu, the Great Spirit, is represented in them. Women and children are never supposed to see them, the former especially, as dire consequences would immediately result. They are more particularly addressed in times of fighting, and before setting forth offerings are presented, with food, and they are entreated to precede the warriors. Success will ever attend their arms if these gods only assist them—disaster and death if they refuse."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Seligmann describes the stone circles and squatting-places at Rogea, and says the megaliths are apparently distributed among many islands in the south-eastern district. In the vicinity of the majority of the hamlets are heaps of stones used as "the squatting and yarning-places of the men. At Rogea these are called *baru* or *balu*, and their practical utility was insisted upon, as it was explained that when all else was sodden these quickly dried and so formed a convenient sitting-place." It is significant, however, that "no woman may approach the Rogea *baru*".

Among the Wamira settlements at Bartle Bay Dr. Seligmann saw circles and lines of stones called "bola-bola" which "obviously correspond to the *gahana* of Wagawaga in Milne Bay". At least some of these were used during cannibal feasts. It appears to be certain, too, that in "old time" they were "debating-places for men". Dr. Seligmann writes in this connexion:

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneering in New Guinea*, pp. 84-5.



"The *bolabola* consisting of rows of stones were, I believe, entirely unconnected with cannibalism and were simply squatting-places. A few of the stones of these *bolabola*, as well as some of those entering into the composition of the stone circles, bore lightly incised designs, but not much could be ascertained relative to the meaning of these. An isolated circle with a central dot on an incised stone in the Irere circle was called *ubona* and represented the 'morning star'; a scroll design upon the same stone had no name. A small circle with radiating hook-like processes at the bottom of the stone was considered to represent either a star or an eye. A cross on the back of this stone was said to represent a starfish."

The upright stones belonged to a family, and at death were inherited by the owner's brother and then by his sister's son. Some stones had names. One incised stone "was said to be called Garuboi although the lines on it bear no particular resemblance to a snake". Women were not allowed to enter the *bolabola*. A fire is sometimes lit nowadays in the centre of a circle, but formerly this place was occupied by a large shallow dish, and when not in use it was kept in a clubhouse.

Dr. Seligmann quotes a letter from Mr. Newton which tells of a search he was making for missing native servants. "I came to a village at night," Newton tells, "and was taken to a circle of stones to sit down and tell the people what we were after."

Mr. Newton's view is that the circle was preferred for the gathering because it was necessary to have a dry place to sit upon. "The natives realize the danger of sitting on damp ground."<sup>1</sup> But they could have entered a house if that were the only reason.

Cannibal feasts, at which a captive was eaten as an act of revenge, are referred to by Dr. Seligmann.

<sup>1</sup> *The Melaneseans of British New Guinea*, pp. 454 et seq.

"The victim was . . . dragged to the stone circle (*gahana*) of the clan which was reserved for cannibal feasts. There he was enveloped in dry coco-nut leaves and lashed to the tree, usually a coco-nut, which always stood in these *gahana*. The leaves were then lighted and as a rule the victim soon expired. . . . One cannibal *gahana* still exists at Wagawaga; it consists of blocks of coral rock loosely piled upon each other to a height of about two feet. . . .

"Only clans with whom intermarriage was not allowed might enter another clan's cannibal *gahana*."<sup>1</sup>

To certain Wedau clans stones are totems. Mr. Newton says of one stone called Warorovuna:

"Warorovuna is a stone, pieces of which were chipped off and boiled, the water being drunk to give strength in war. People came from far and near to get this; it was only given to allies."<sup>2</sup>

The "rocking stone" is prominent in the myths of the Kiwai-speaking Papuans regarding the land of the dead which is called Adiri or Woibu. On the road to this region is the island of Paho where grows a tree, known as *dani*. The ghosts sit in its shade and weep. Close to the tree is a rocking stone. The ghosts cause it to rock, and the sounds it makes resemble that issuing from a well-beaten drum. Male ghosts dance on one side of the rocking stone and female ghosts on the other. Then they all pass on.<sup>3</sup>

The Kiwai-speaking Papuans, according to Landtman, tell of a mythical man of Tudu island, named Múiere, who was a "culture hero" and taught them the *nigori* ceremony. Then he "transformed himself into a stone". The stone is "fairly large" and is placed at the end of a platform during the ceremony, smaller ones being deposited in the centre.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Seligmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 556-7.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Dr. Seligmann, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

<sup>3</sup> G. Landtman, quoted by Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. 1, pp. 212-3.



The *mimia* stone which figures in a fire ceremony is a lump of coral "crudely shaped like the head and shoulders of a man".

Every person in Kiwai has a totem, those of the vegetable kingdom predominating. But there are also animal totems, the wild pig, however, occurring rarely. Stones are also totems.

Stones are used in magical ceremonies. A fragment of stone will "teach the yams to become big and strong". Stones from the mythical mountains of the male Siva and the female Naka help to cure a sick person, and they are also "used as medicine" for the posts of houses. Between these mythical mountains in Dibiri a tree, named Dárái, is supposed to grow.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. B. Malinowski, writing of the Trobriand Islanders to the east of New Guinea, draws attention to the remarkable belief in big living stones in the open seas. Of these there are two types: one type, the *nuwakekepaki*, which Dr. Malinowski thinks are "probably nothing but malevolent stones"; the other type called *vineylida* are inhabited by witches or malevolent beings, *vine* meaning "female" and *lida* "coral stone".

"Sometimes a *vineylida* will spring to the surface and hold fast the canoe, very much in the same manner as the giant octopus would do. And here again offerings would have to be given. A folded mat would first be thrown in an attempt to deceive it; if this were of no avail, a little boy would be anointed with coconut oil, adorned with arm-shells and *bagi* necklaces, and thrown to the evil stones."<sup>2</sup>

The giant octopus referred to is supposed to lie in wait for canoes sailing on the open sea. It is so big that "it would cover a whole village with its body; its arms

<sup>1</sup> G. Landtman, *The Kima Papuans of British New Guinea*, London, 1927, pp. 19, 77, 186-8, 190, 225, 370, 401, 414, 416.

<sup>2</sup> *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, London, 1922, p. 235.



are thick as coco-nut palms". If a canoe is seized by this monster it cannot move for many days. Then the crew, "dying of hunger and thirst, . . . decide to sacrifice one of the small boys". When the boy is thrown overboard the octopus releases its hold on the canoe.<sup>1</sup>

The Motu people have no sacred tree, but when a branch falls off a tree called Budabuda "they expect news of fighting and death". On the other hand, a sacred tree is revered by the Motumotu. It is in the bush, and "no one attempts to cut it or injure it in any way as it belongs to the spirit, and he often dwells there. Sickness and death would be the penalty for attempting to cut it down".<sup>2</sup>

According to the Motu the first man and woman "sprang from the earth". The Motumotu tell that Hiovaki came down from the sky, felled a coco-nut, and from its wood shaped "men and women in abundance" and built a house for them. Before returning to the sky he said to human beings, "If you bring me a present, all right; if not, I shall return and slay you." After that when cooked food was offered to Hiovaki "he descended and ate it".

This deity, Hiovaki, has a wife called Kauue. His father is Semese, and his younger brother Miai. Hiovaki made sky, land, and sea. When a man is killed in a fight Hiovaki takes him to his place in the sky "which is good".

According to the Motu people the sky and the earth were formerly very close to one another. Those who lived on the earth did not require to plant anything. They simply spread a mat on the ground, prayed, "and the door of the heavens was opened and plenty was

<sup>1</sup> *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, London, 1922, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> James Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, p. 172.

poured forth ". One day, however, a man had a quarrel with his two wives. In his wrath he sprang up "and with his sharp flint cut the cane asunder that bound heaven and earth ". Then away up went the sky and down went the earth.

Although the Motu and Motumotu both believe in a sky world, they had different ideas regarding the origin of mankind. The former believe that after death the ghosts pass to an Otherworld and "become white men and women ". It is believed by the Motumotu that the spirit-land is "a good place with plenty of sago close by ".

Both peoples dance. The Motu believe that if they do not dance and rejoice when crops are flourishing "there will be an end to the good growth ". If they continue dancing "all will go well ". The Motumotu similarly explain their dancing ceremonies, and add that these cause all the spirits to rejoice. Sickness is "frightened away " by drum-beating, fire-throwing, &c., at the new moon.<sup>1</sup>

Questioned regarding spirits the Motu said that in addition to human beings "only pigs and wallabies have spirits", and when they die "the spirits go to Larogi ". The Motumotu believe that "dogs, pigs, and birds have spirits " which go to the Otherworld for the use of the spirits of human beings. "All objects," they add, "have spirits." The Motu people believe that the spirits "have all power ", and that when they are angry "there is famine ". Both the Motu and Motumotu peoples hold communications with spirits, but "have no power over them ".

When spirits go to the distant island of Paradise they are, the Motu people believe, "put on a kind of

<sup>1</sup> James Chalmers, *op. cit.*, pp. 173 *et seq.*





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#### A HARVEST FESTIVAL IN THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS

After being exhibited in the gardens the yams, decorated with streamers of Pandanus, are borne high upon stretchers, preceded by the garden magicians who chant a litany, and are carried to the village. The high platform on the right is erected for the spirits to sit upon, and a food offering is made to them. The buildings in the background are the yam houses, where the vegetables will eventually be stored.





gridiron to be dried over a slow fire, in order that they may become ethereal and light. They have no noses."<sup>1</sup> This seems to be a memory of the mummy-drying process.

Many supernatural beings have peculiarities to distinguish them from normal human beings, and especially those prone to "materialize". The Scottish banshee, for instance, has only one nostril, and in Scotland as in India there are beings which have but one leg and one arm. New Guinea has its "Atani Tano, who lives in the sea, and in outward form resembles a man with very long hair but without arms or legs", and its Godiva who "resembles a man with long frizzy hair but has no toes on his feet".<sup>2</sup>

Although the Motu believe the ghosts of their dead are noseless, they attach much importance to nose piercing among the living. Chalmers was informed that

"Any one dying with unpierced nose goes in the other state to Tageani, a bad place where there is little food and no betel nuts. Children are well grown, about six years old, before the nose is pierced, and any one dying before that age will have his nose pierced after death by his parents."<sup>3</sup>

The worst thing that can be done to an enemy is to send him to the Otherworld without a nose. Chalmers writes in this connexion:

"When a man is shot down a rush is made and the first to bite his nose clean off and swallow it is looked upon as greater than the person who shot him; great is the glory attached to the act. On returning from the fight, and when near the bank of the creek, the women come out and ask, 'Who are the killers?' Who are the nose-eaters?' and when the latter question is replied to, great is the singing, dancing, and rejoicing."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James Chalmers, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-9.

<sup>2</sup> C. G. Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, Cambridge, 1910, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> James Chalmers, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

In Polynesia the swallowing of the eyeballs of enemies is similarly meritorious, perhaps because, as in India, the belief obtains that the soul is in the eye—"the little man in the eye" who is compared to "the little man in the sun". In New Guinea the nose may be similarly connected with the soul or "the air of life".

The Motu believe that a sudden attack of illness is caused by an evil spirit called Vata who lives in the bush. "When a person is taken suddenly ill," says the Rev. Dr. Turner, "they say Vata has killed him", and he is allowed to die.<sup>1</sup> A Vata, it appears, may be just a sorcerer.

The Koita people have long been closely associated with the Motu, and intermarriage has always taken place freely. "Many of the Koita villages," says Dr. Seligmann, "are built in direct continuity with Motu settlements. The village sites of the two tribes may, however, be distinct but close together, as in the case of Kila Kila which stands on the ridge of a hill immediately behind the Motu settlement Vabukori. . . . The houses of each clan are usually built close together."<sup>2</sup> This system of dual grouping is interesting and suggestive.

A myth which tells of the origin of the Koita tribe is to the effect that two ancestors named Kirimaikulu and Kirimaikape came out of the earth with a female dog "which they took unto themselves". The myth proceeds:

"A son was born, then a daughter, and again a son, followed by a daughter. The first two grew up and married, and their children numbered fourteen. Two went back inland, and became the progenitors of the Koiari tribe; two went in from the coast by the banks of the Laroge, and from them descended the Koitapu tribe; the others all went to Elema where they were increased."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, XII, 1878, pp. 470 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, pp. 44-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow*, Vol. XVIII, 1886, p. 57.



An important branch of the Melanesians of British New Guinea are the Sinaugolo from whom the Koita had received certain cultural elements. The Sinaugolo came originally from a cave "on the slopes of Mount Taborogoro". They possessed a carved post which became the model of the posts in the first "dubu".

The Sinaugolo were also associated with the Garia. In early times they lived together in the earth and they spoke different languages even before they came to the surface through the ancestral cave.<sup>1</sup>

The Koi venerate the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon being "the chief ones". Captain Barton tells that "they only 'yell' for the new moon".

While the Motu are mainly fishers who make pottery, the Koita are agriculturists and horticulturists. "Yours are the sea, the canoes, the nets," the Koita say to the Motu; "ours the land and the wallaby. Give us fish for our flesh, and pottery for our yams and bananas." The Motu believe the Koita are magic-workers who can control the weather. An interesting fact is that the Koita speak a Papuan dialect, while the Motu speak a Melanesian one, but, as indicated, their blood is very mixed owing to intermarriage.

The Koita, like the Motu, practise nose boring, believing that if the nose is not properly treated the ghost would in the next world be afflicted by a horrible worm clinging to the nostrils. The ghosts live on Mount Idu where they have gardens and houses, marry and live happily for a long period, after which they grow weak and perish.

Prominent among their mythical beings are those called *tabu* which appear as snakes, eels, starfish, or crabs. An eel living in a well or spring is supposed to

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Seligmann, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

be the water-giver; if it were killed "the well or spring would dry up".<sup>1</sup>

Hara Tabu is a mythical being of the dragon order connected with a hillock about 150 feet high near the Laloki River. This hillock is avoided by natives. It had origin in a curious way. A man who had been catching prawns in the river claimed by a tabu was followed by a snake which announced it would be his companion ever afterwards. To get rid of it he by means of a trick had it thrown into a hole which was at once filled up with earth and stones. During the night there was an earthquake, and in the morning the villagers saw that the hill called Hara Tabu had arisen on the spot where the snake had been buried.<sup>2</sup>

Mummification is practised in parts of New Guinea. On the island of Jobi or Jappen in Geelvink Bay the corpses are dried over a slow bamboo fire. They are then wrapped in cloth and kept in dwelling-houses. Old mummies are, when removed from houses, placed in the hollow trunks of trees.<sup>3</sup>

The Papuans of Geelvink Bay also make wooden images of the dead, and these are kept in houses and consulted from time to time. They are also carried in canoes. A carved wooden image is usually about a foot high.

"The head is disproportionately large, the nose long and projecting, the mouth wide and well furnished with teeth; the eyes are formed of large green or blue beads with black dots to indicate the pupils. Sometimes the male figures carry a shield in the left hand and brandish a sword in the right; while the female figures are represented grasping with both hands a serpent which stands on its coiled tail. Rags of many colours adorn these

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Seligmann, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Seligmann, *op. cit.*, 184-5.

<sup>3</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, p. 313.



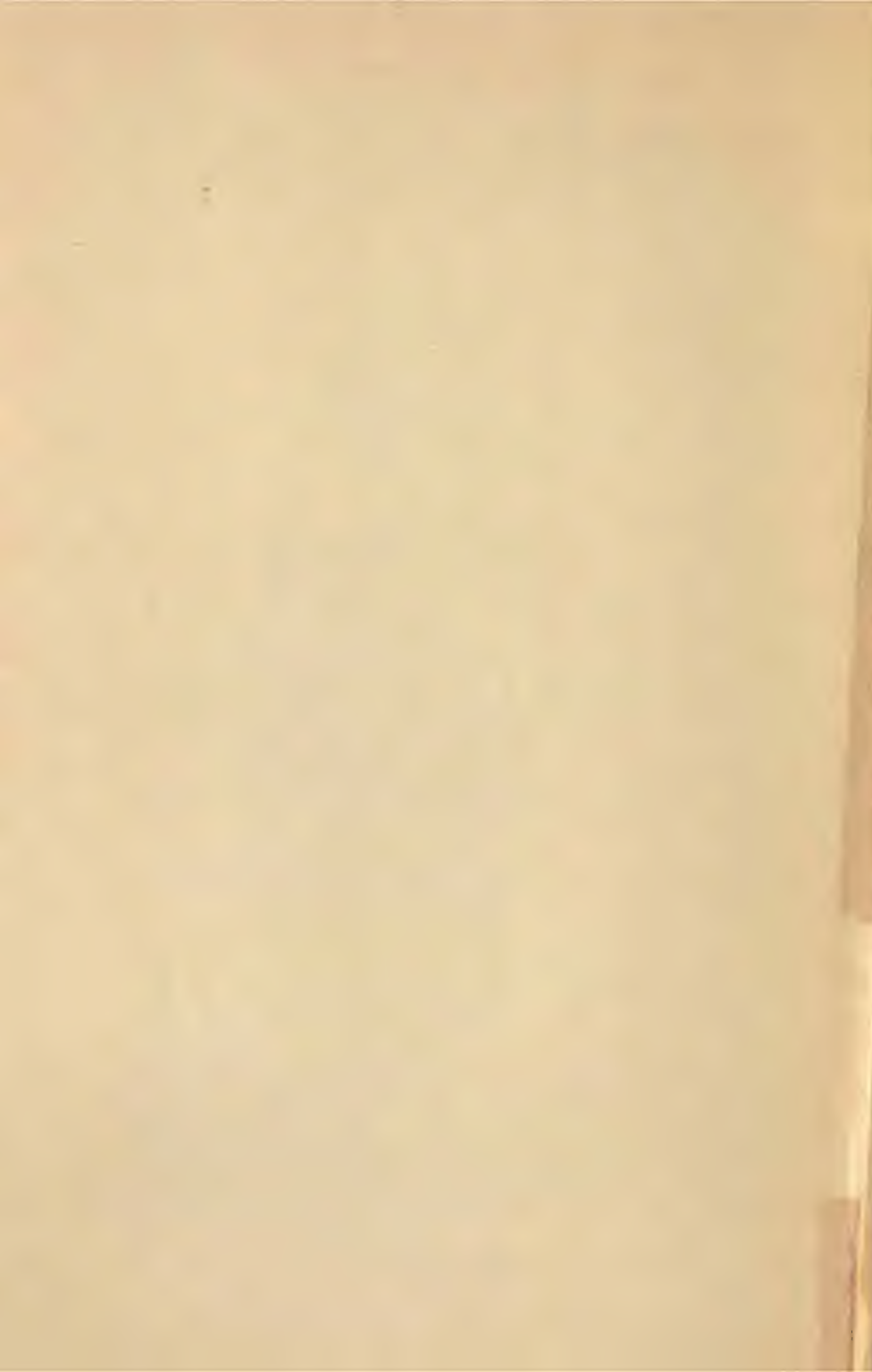


Pl. 92

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TWO CLUBS AND A DANCING-SHIELD FROM S.E. NEW GUINEA  
AND ARCHIPELAGO





figures, and the hair of the deceased, whom they represent, is placed between their legs."

The images are identified as the persons whom they represent and are spoken of as their father, mother, or other relation; they are greeted reverentially "by bowing to the earth before them with the two hands joined and raised to the forehead".<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes an image consists of the skull of the deceased and a body of wood.

When a preserved head is used, the features are restored as they decay. The nose and ears are replaced by wooden imitations, small round fruits are used to replace the eyeballs and so on. The kind of wood used to replace the features "varies according as the deceased was a male or female". The family gather together as the artist performs the work, chanting "a melancholy dirge".<sup>2</sup> This custom appears to be closely connected with mummification.

When Captain Frank Hurley and his party reached the Sambios people about Lake Murray, a collection of preserved heads was obtained. Some skulls were made "incredibly grotesque" by the addition of long false noses decorated with red and grey seeds. He writes regarding the gruesome trophies:

"The heads had been severed from the victims, preserving the neck as long as possible; the skin had been slit up the back of the neck to the cranium, and the brain and all fleshy parts extracted by mascerating in water and scraping with a bamboo knife. The skin had been replaced on the skull and stuffed with coco-nut fibre. The native taxidermist then sowed it up at the back. The stuffing process distorted the face longitudinally, whilst the mouth, which was forced open excessively, was stopped with a ball of clay. The eyes were likewise treated and decorated with red seeds.

<sup>1</sup> *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. I, pp. 307-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 311-2.

The whole gruesome object had evidently been subjected to a lengthy smoke-curing process which mummified it and stopped decay. Finally the trophy was decorated with Ionic designs executed in red and yellow ochre and a large seed was found in the brain cavity, which evidently caused much grim amusement when shaken as a rattle during their death dances."<sup>1</sup>

The use of portrait masks in magico-religious ceremonies may also be referred to in connexion with mummification. R. Neuhauss in his *Deutsch Neu Guinea* deals with the masks of the region of Augusta River. They are kept in ghost houses and are made of clay. An interesting fact about them is that they are decorated with tattoo markings unknown in New Guinea but closely resembling the markings favoured by the Maoris of New Zealand.

Masks are of considerable antiquity and have been used over wide areas in the Old and New Worlds. In her interesting study of them Ellen Russell Emerson says <sup>2</sup>:

"The original purposes of the mask were religious and serious. Their object, like the earliest form of the drama, was the manifestation—the incarnation—of the gods. Rite and formula carefully guarded them; reverence for their indwelling 'breath', animating both mask and wearer, preserved them. Not until a late period of advanced civilization in Europe were they deemed unfit for religious spectacle. In Tibet, where Buddhism with its meditative aspect toward the Unseen had raised metaphysical conjecture to rapt vision, the masked drama was held as a religious exercise."

The antiquities of British New Guinea and German New Guinea are summarized as follows by Mr. Chinnery:

"The objects are 'sacred' stones, standing stones, stone circles;

<sup>1</sup> Frank Hurley, *Pearls and Savages*, London, 1924, pp. 18 and 182-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Masks, Heads, and Faces*, London, 1892, p. 304.



shells with incised ornamentation consisting of concentric circles, spiral scrolls, and human face representations; fragments of ornamented pottery; stone carvings of birds (with snake-like head), human and animal figures; pestles and mortars of granite, lava, and other stone, in various shapes, some of them carved; perforated quartz implements in various forms, some of which have been converted into stonehead clubs, and implements of obsidian and other stone not used by existing races."<sup>1</sup>

An interesting fact is that there have been found in New Guinea "pottery fragments and implements of obsidian and stone, which differ entirely from the pottery and implements used at the present time by the inhabitants of the localities in which the finds were made".<sup>2</sup>

Evidently we must allow for the influence of a people who in early times—perhaps during the migrations into the South Sea Islands—sojourned in parts of New Guinea and became blended with the mixed stock found in the south-eastern area. The adoration of stones, beliefs connected with water-providing snakes, the adoration of the heavenly bodies, the practice of mummification, and the making of images, suggest that Indonesia was the source of the influence in question. There may have been also a "back wash" of peoples from the Melanesian islands after the Melanesian complexes had assumed their recognizable characters. The criss-crossing of cultural influences appear to account for the "mosaics" of beliefs and practices prevailing in the different areas. It is at any rate quite certain that the religious phenomena of New Guinea cannot be accounted for by urging the theory of independent origin.

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 49, 1919, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> Seligmann and Joyce in *Anthropological Essays*, presented to E. B. Taylor, Oxford, 1907 p. 325.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Bird and Serpent Myths of Indonesia

Hindu Myths in Indonesia—Buddhist Dragons and Birds—Culture Drifting and Mixing—Passing of Priests and Decline of Myths—Myths from Philippines—The First Parents and the Great Drought—Connexion of Kingship with Agriculture—Hindu Myth of Tapati—King's Absence causes Drought—The Sky God of the Bagobo—Ancestor as Judge of Dead—Nose-making Myth—Men from Grass—Rescuing Eagle in Deluge Myth—Female Survivor of Deluge—Nāga in Borneo Creation Myth—Man-egg and Woman-egg—Serpent-dragon as Eel-dragon in Philippines—Creation Myth of Sumatra—Eggs from Sky World—Featherless Bird as Mother of First Parents—Egg Myth of Philippines—The Dove Mother—The Snake and the Dove—Hindu and Borneo Myths of Sleeping God—Earth formed by Birds—Red Resin as Blood—The Sleeping Python—Borneo Deluge Myths—"Half-Man" Myths—Scottish and Hindu "Half-men"—Indonesian "Half-men" Stories—Maid and Youth who divided Themselves—Various Versions of Myth—The Half-man Constellation—Sky Brides who divided Children—The "Thunder Boys"—Half-pig Myth.

The myths of Indonesia which have been collected from natives, are in some cases of elaborate and in others of fragmentary character. Not a few bear traces of Hindu influence, and especially that of the Buddhist dragon myth in which the *Nāga* (serpent deity) is associated with the mythical eagle (*Garuda*), or some other miraculous bird. As De Visser has shown, the *Nāga* is associated with water, dwelling below rivers and lakes, and is a giver of rain and the cause of thunder. It is, withal, the guardian of magic-working gems and pearls. The *Nāga* is, in short, the Hindu-Buddhist dragon, and there are various types of dragons including "Serpent-



Fig. 100

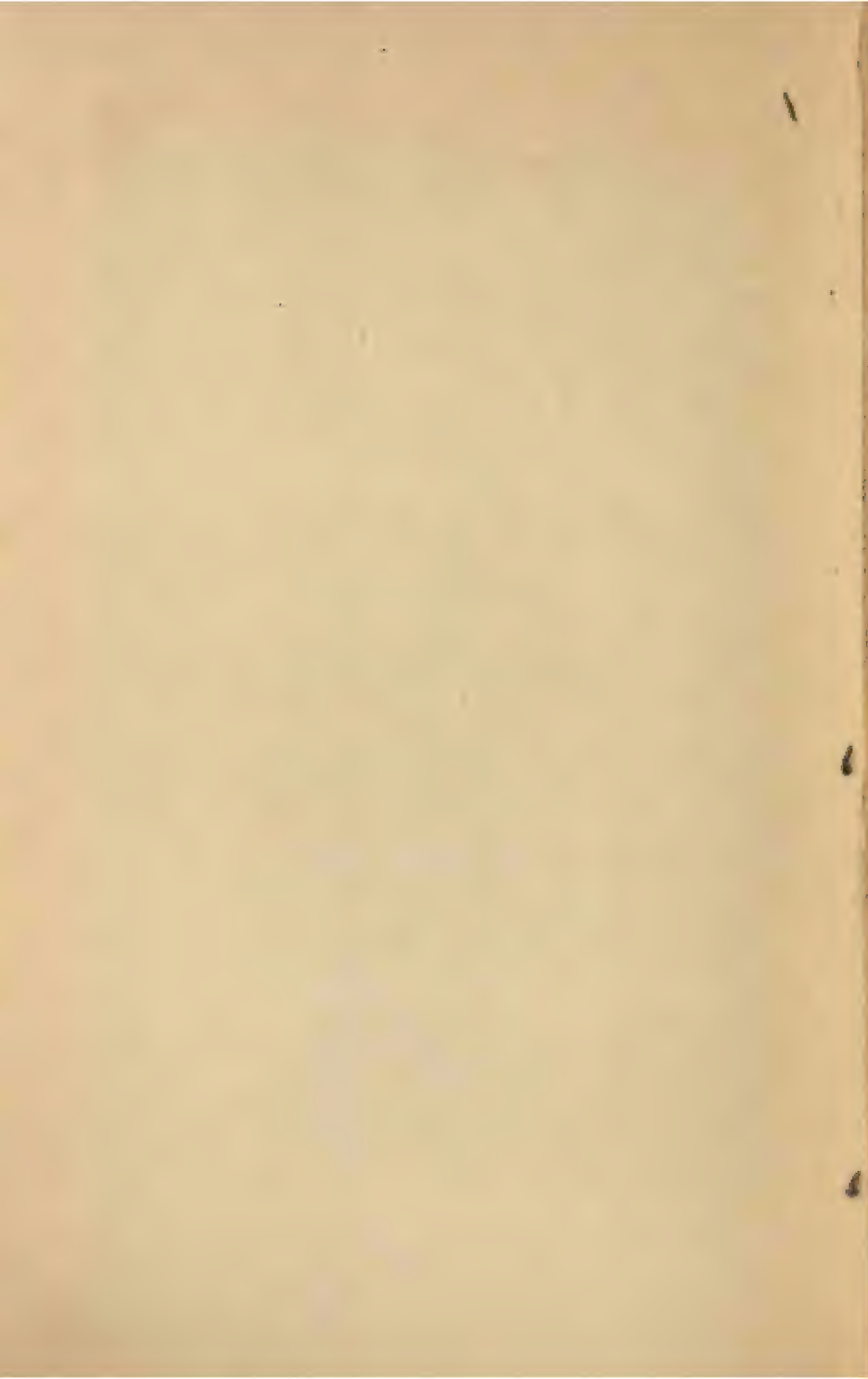
By permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

# MASKS WORN BY MEMBERS OF SECRET SOCIETIES, NEW GUINEA

a, b, Bark-cloth: Elenia district. c, Carved wood: Tami Island, Huon Gulf.

1901





dragons", "Lizard-dragons", "Elephant-dragons", "Toad-dragons", and also shark, whale, eel, and other forms of the sea-dragon. All *Nāgas*, or dragons, are capable of assuming human or partly-human shape.

Originally in Hindu myths the *Garuda* bird preyed on *Nāgas*, which they devoured, but after the Buddhists had taken over (or "converted") the *Nāgas* and *Garudas*, these were reconciled as "obedient servants" of the Buddha god. As a deity, Buddha then became the weather-controller and the season-controller with solar attributes. Rain was sent as a reward to the faithful and drought as a punishment.<sup>1</sup>

De Visser shows that Heretical Buddhism—that is, Buddhism which had become contaminated with serpent worship, &c.—"adopted the gods of the countries where it introduced itself and made them protectors of its doctrine instead of its antagonists. Sometimes, as we read, the Buddha, in a previous existence, succeeded in reconciling even such bitter enemies as a *Nāga* and a *Garuda* king. He himself was sometimes born as a mighty *Nāga* king." As a *Nāga* king, he sometimes appeared fasting on an ant heap, "offering his magnificent snake body to the passers by". The *Nāga*-dragon sometimes assumed gigantic form. Buddha had also his *Garuda* form.<sup>1</sup>

In Indonesia the Buddhist dragon lore became fused with the cult of the "worshippers of stone"—a cult with which the adoration of the sun and the serpent was intimately connected. Gods and human beings emerge from rocks or stones. A good deal of "myth mixing" consequently took place.

Streaks of other cultural influences are also to be detected. The pig, as we have seen, is a "mystical

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. W. De Visser, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, Amsterdam, 1913, pp. 7 et seq.

animal " in some Indonesian areas. Here and there we meet also in the myths and folk-tales with traces of the doctrines connected with mummification, and especially the idea that life is perpetuated in the next world by preserving the head or skull, or by taking the entrails from a dead or living person. There are, withal, traces of tree worship which had an association with the cult of megaliths, and with the influence of the Hindu Brahmanic creation myths in which the primordial egg figures as prominently as it does in Polynesian mythology. The "half-men" myths of Indonesia appear to be of Hindu origin.

Indonesia, after the period of the Polynesian and Melanesian migrations, was subjected to ethnic disturbances which profoundly influenced its mythology. The Malay migrations, for instance, brought in new myths and new religious practices which overlaid or supplanted the existing myths and practices. In some areas, however, we meet with a good deal of the older material which has connexions with either Melanesia or Polynesia, or with both. Flood myths are common although a genuine cosmogony may be rare or very fragmentary. It does not follow, however, that the myths which link with those of Samoa, in which Tangaloa figures prominently, are necessarily "late". It may well be that the culture influence of India in this connexion was earlier than that which brought in a good many myths of more primitive character.

The passing of the organized priesthood, due to political changes, would be sufficient to cause the degeneration of religious systems, and the disintegration of myths which, surviving as "folk-tales", assumed in time a so-called "primitive" aspect, but yet contain for us fragmentary evidence of a noble origin. Among a backward



people, whose teachers have vanished, the most elaborate myths were bound to reach the decadent stage.

Even when we examine the myths of the mountain tribes of the Philippines, we meet with traces of outside influence which had at one time or other been operative. The Bagobo of the Davao District of Southern Mindanao of the Philippines, who are rapidly becoming Christians and leaving their mountain homes to dwell in towns, believe, for instance, that their first parents who lived on Mount Apo were the man Toglai and the woman Toglibon who, after death, went to the sky-world, becoming spirits.

"Soon after their death the country suffered a great drought. This finally became so severe that the water in the rivers dried up and there was no more food in the land. At last the children were forced to leave their home and seek out new habitations in other parts. They travelled in pairs in different directions, until they came to favourable locations where they settled down. From them have sprung all the tribes known to the Bagobo."

The myth goes on to tell that one pair was too weak to make the journey from the land afflicted by drought, and remained at Cibolan.

"One day the man crawled out into the ruined fields to see if he could not find some one thing alive, and when he arrived there saw, to his amazement, a single stalk of sugar-cane growing lustily. He cut it with his knife, and water began to come out until there was enough for the couple to drink. The flow did not cease until the rains came again to refresh the land. From these two the tribe has again grown until it numbers its members in the thousands. The people have remained true to their belief in the spirits, and each year has found them stronger in numbers, and richer in houses, land, and slaves."

This myth may be explained as, in part, a folk-

memory of ancient migrations. Some may suggest that the great drought was an actual experience, but it cannot be contended that any ancestor ever found a sugar-cane which yielded a supply of water. On the other hand, the view may be urged that the myth had its origin in the belief that the neglect of rain-getting ceremonies was followed by the punishment of a great drought—such a punishment as is threatened in the Buddhist writings.

When, however, the myth is closely examined its history is found to be rooted in an advanced state of civilization. During the life-time of the ancestor Toglai and his wife "many fruits grew on the mountains and the forests abounded in game so that it was easy for them to secure food". Apparently the food supply depended on the ruler; so long as he lived and reigned the tribe prospered. His absence from the country caused a drought and famine. The kingship had, in short, a close connexion with the production of food, a belief that certainly did not originate among a hunting people, but was evidently acquired from one practising the agricultural mode of life. The Bagobo are, as a matter of fact, agriculturists. "Their rice-fields," we learn, "are made in mountain-side clearings, and as the ever-present cogon grass begins to invade the open land they substitute sweet potatoes or hemp. In time even these lusty plants give way to the rank grass, and the people find it easier to make new clearings in the forest than to combat the pest with the primitive tools at their command." The "wilder tribes" are, therefore, "to a certain extent, migratory, moving their villages from one location to another according to the demands of their mode of agriculture".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fay-Cooper Cole, *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, Chicago, 1913, pp. 52 et seq.



In a Hindu version of the widespread myth of the marriage of a human being to a sky-maiden, which is given in the *Mahābhārata*<sup>1</sup>, we find evidence of the control over crops exercised by the king.

Once upon a time the rajah Samvarana hunted deer on a mountain side. He grew thirsty and hungry and searched for water and food. In the course of his wanderings he saw "a maiden of large eyes and unrivalled for her beauty". He immediately fell in love with her; as the narrative relates he "was pierced with Kama's<sup>2</sup> shafts and lost his peace of mind". He confessed his love, but the maiden "quickly disappeared in the very sight of the wishful monarch". She was a daughter of the sun-god Surya, and her name was Tapati.

Through the good offices of a Brahman, the sky-maiden was brought back to earth and became the monarch's bride. But the rajah Samvarana loved Tapati so much that he neglected his kingdom; for twelve years he remained on the mountain and among the woods with the entrancing lady, and the kingdom suffered from his absence.

The *Mahābhārata* story continues:

"The god of a thousand eyes poured no rain for twelve years in the capital and kingdom of that monarch. . . . When that season of drought commenced, the people of that kingdom, as also the trees and lower animals, began to die fast. And during the continuance of that dreadful drought, not even a drop of dew fell from the skies and no corn was grown. And the inhabitants in despair, afflicted with the fear of hunger, left their houses and fled away in all directions."

Steps were ultimately taken to secure the return of the rajah to his capital. He brought with him the beautiful Tapati.

<sup>1</sup> *Adi Parva*, Sections CLXXIII to CLXXV.  
(200)

<sup>2</sup> The Hindu Cupid.  
21



"And after the king had entered his capital, things became as before. For when that tiger among kings came back to his own, the god of a thousand eyes—the slayer of Asuras—poured rain in abundance and caused corn to grow. And *revivified by that foremost of monarchs of virtuous soul, the capital and the country became glad with exceeding joy.* And the monarch with his wife Tapati once more performed sacrifices for twelve years like the lord Indra performing sacrifices with his wife Shachi. . . . King Samvarana begat upon Tapati a son named Kuru."

This Kuru was the ancestor of the Aryo-Indian tribe of Kurus.

The Bagobo origin myth is evidently a folk-memory of the beliefs and practices which their ancestors had acquired with the agricultural mode of life.

In Bagobo mythology the chief god is Manama (Eugpamolak Manobo) "who was the first cause and creator of all". A vast number of spirits serve this divine ruler and they are "not malevolently inclined, but capable of exacting punishment unless proper offerings and other tokens of respect are accorded them". There are also "mean spirits who delight to annoy mankind with mischievous pranks, or even to bring sickness and disaster to them". They dwell in "mountains, cliffs, rocks, trees, rivers, and springs". Between the two classes of spirits are "the shades of the dead, who, after they have departed from this life, continue to exercise considerable influence, for good or bad, over the living". There are also "patron spirits" who protect warriors, and human sacrifices are offered to them in December when the constellation *Balatik* (Orion) appears in the sky.

Some of the tribes regard Toglai, the first man, as a judge of the dead; others identify him with Manama, the creator who dwells in the sky. He and his wife

"are now responsible for all marriages and births".<sup>1</sup>

In the southern end of Mindanao and the adjacent small islands Fay-Cooper Cole detected a kind of decoration "typical of Melanesia".<sup>2</sup>

The Bila-an tribe, found in the mountains on the west side of Davao Gulf, have a myth which reminds us of the belief in New Guinea regarding noseless spirits. The chief god is Melú who is white and has gold teeth; he sits on the clouds, occupying all space above. He made the first two men. He had completed them, except their noses, when Tau Tana, a god who dwells below the earth, demanded to be allowed to shape the noses. Tau Tana made the noses, but placed them upside down on the faces of the two human beings. The couple were then left to look after themselves on the earth. But a great rain came on and the water ran off their heads into their nostrils. Melú had, therefore, to come down from the clouds to "change their noses".<sup>3</sup> A famine, caused by drought, is mentioned in Bila-an mythology as in that of the Bagobo.

The Atá people also recognize Manama as their chief god but tell that he made the first human beings from grass, weaving the blades together until they resembled the human form. Eight persons, male and female, were made in this way, and they were the ancestors of the various tribes.

Long afterwards "the water covered the whole earth and all the Atá were drowned except two men and a woman. The waters carried them far away and they would have perished had not a large eagle come to their aid." One of the men, however, declined to accept the eagle's assistance.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, pp. 53 *et seq.*, and 106 *et seq.* See also pp. 125 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.



In India the rescuing "eagle" is the Garuda bird.

The Mandaya of Cateel have likewise a deluge legend. "Many generations ago," it tells, "a great flood occurred which caused the death of all the inhabitants except one pregnant woman." She afterwards gave birth to a son named Uacatan, the ancestor of the tribe, having become "husband of his mother". Rain comes from a great lake in the sky which, when the spirits are angered, breaks its banks, allowing the water to fall in torrents.<sup>1</sup>

The search for primitive myths in the northern area of Indonesia, even among the upland tribes, appears to be a vain one. Everywhere there are indications of contact at some period or other with peoples who were in a more advanced stage of civilization, and whose influence can be seen, like flies in amber, in the fragments of mythology surviving among the folk.

When we pass to other parts of Indonesia we find fuller versions of some of the myths collected in the Philippines, including those in which the serpent-dragon figures prominently.

✓ Dr. Schwaner gives a creation myth of Borneo which tells that the first thing that existed was the water in which a monstrous snake, named *Nāga Busai*, "moved about, shining with brilliant colours and adorned with a diamond crown". Its head was as big as the world, and Hatala (the chief god) "having poured out earth on it, the continent rose above the waters as an island, resting on the head of the *Nāga*".

The *Nāga* is the Hindu serpent deity. Dr. Schwaner has suggested that *busai* is a rendering of *vasuki*, the Hindu name of the *Nāga* king. "Hatala" is apparently a rendering of the Arabic "Allah taāla" <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, p. 173.



After the island appeared, a god named Ranying Atala descended from the sky and found on it seven eggs. He selected two, seeing in one the body of a man and in the other the body of a woman. Both bodies resembled corpses.

"Ranying Atala then went back to the Creator in order to ask him for the breath which was still wanting.

"In the meantime the Sangsang Angai (the wind-god) descended to the earth and breathed the breath into these human forms, causing them to have life but at the same time depositing in them the germs of death.

"Ranying Atala who had intended to impart the breath of immortality to man, saw Angai's work on his arrival. Mournfully he returned to heaven, not only taking with him the immortality of man, but also depriving the earth of all other divine gifts destined by him for the human race, such as eternal youth, general and undisturbed happiness, abundance of rejoicing without labour; in a word, the entire bliss of Paradise."

The other five eggs which lay beside the man-egg and the woman-egg contained the germs of all plants and animals.<sup>1</sup>

The serpent which supports or forms the earth becomes an eel in a Philippine myth. According to the Bagobo people two eels lived in a torrent which has its origin at the foot of Apo. They grew so large that there was insufficient room for them and they decided to separate. One reached the ocean and became the ancestor of the sea-eels. The other, searching for the sea, leapt over a cascade and was dashed against the rocks. "Too fatigued to swim through the rough waters, he lost his life. This body lay there inert and formed undulations which are now the folds which the earth forms to the left of Mount Apo."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Appendix, p. clxxx.

<sup>2</sup> Fay-Cooper Cole, *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, Chicago, 1913, p. 127.

A creation-egg myth with the seven eggs has been collected by C. M. Pleyte among the Battak of Sumatra. It begins by invoking the god *Batara guru doli* (Batara guru the man) son of the Sumatran Kronos and reigning deity, and refers to the holy fig tree whose roots come down to the rock on this earth which the gods frequent—the Sumatran Mount Meru. This heavenly tree shades the god, and “birds of the sky” hop and warble among its branches. The god’s daughter is *Sitapi Sindar di mata ni ari*, i.e. “Sitapi illuminated by the sun”. One day Sitapi looked down from the sky and was struck with sadness because she saw nothing but “a bare plain”. Her father afterwards dreamed a bad dream regarding the world below the sky, and he sent down one of his swallows (messengers of the god) to investigate for him. The bird descended in wide circles and on reaching the world beneath sought for a place on which to rest. At length it found a rock. It could not return to the sky because of the strong wind.

Si-tapi sent down another swallow to search for the first which it found, but it could not return either.

Si-tapi next sent down the large tick called the “cow-flea” and it reached the two swallows on the rock. The first swallow climbed the rock (or mountain) but could not reach the roots of the sky fig tree and lamented loudly. Si-tapi heard its cries and ascertained what had happened. She had seven hen’s eggs and a magic ring lowered down, and called to the swallow:

“When you three have settled on *Tanjuk tolu* (the rock) then you must open the eggs, and you will find in them all the plants and trees which you may require; but if you want to have cattle you must call on the magic ring<sup>1</sup> and you will get not only cattle but also all kinds of animals, habitations, council-houses, and whatever more you may wish for.”

<sup>1</sup> Also known as the “all-creating ring”, and the “wishing ring”.



When the eggs were opened the three creatures had splendid fields, gardens, houses, food, and drink.

Then they prayed to the god *Batara guru* for offspring "in order to people the village".

The god heard the prayer and ordered his sister *Pandan rumari* to go down to the earth. She is the goddess of agriculture who figures in the folk-tales as "an old widow friendly to men".

The goddess is assisted to descend by Si-tapi who made a basket by twisting her hair and pleating it and gave her a magic finger ring. She reached the rock and settled at the foot of it.

There was subsequently sent down from the sky the bird *Imbulu Man*. Pleyte found that this was "a featherless bird which received its feathers from other birds and thence was called *Naga portuppuwan*, i.e. 'Naga dressed in which is brought together'". Pleyte adds that the bird is "the hero (heroine) of many tales" and had been "born from a drop of clotted blood on which a hawk had been brooding as on an egg". This bird "was like a human being as regarded her skin. She was also, through the will of *Butura guru*, pregnant of a human fruit." After some time the bird gave birth to two daughters who became the wives of the two swallows. The cow-flea secretly got the featherless bird with child and she gave birth to a son. In time the first swallow's wife gave birth to a son, and the second swallow's wife to two daughters. The myth concludes:

"As they made their children intermarry, the inhabitants of *Tanjuk tolu* could soon rejoice in the possession of numerous descendants, whose swarms filled the newly-founded village."<sup>1</sup>

The "magic ring" or "wishing ring" appears to be a form of the serpent as it is in the Nias creation myth:

<sup>1</sup> C. M. Pleyte, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 1897, Vol. XXVI, pp. 103 et seq



In this connexion it is of interest to find that the "featherless bird" is called a *Naga*, the name of the Hindu serpent deity.

The egg myth is found in the Davao area in the Philippines. The Mandaya ("Inhabitants of the Uplands"), who formerly dwelt far back among the mountains, tell of the first man and woman emerging from the eggs of the *limokon* (a dove). This pair "are now true spirits who exercise considerable influence over worldly affairs". Ghosts go to the sky after death.

The people of Mayo tell that the *limokon*, although a bird, had the gift of human speech.

"At one time it laid two eggs, one at the mouth and one at the source of the Mayo river. These hatched and from one at the headwaters of the river came a woman named Mag, while a man named Begenday emerged from the one near the sea.

"For many years the man dwelt alone on the bank of the river, but one day, being lonely and dissatisfied with his location, he started to cross the stream. While he was in deep water a long hair was swept against his legs and held him so tightly that he narrowly escaped drowning. When he succeeded in reaching the shore he examined the hair and at once determined to find its owner. After wandering many days he met the woman and induced her to be his wife. From this union came all the Mandaya."

A variant of this myth is to the effect that both eggs were laid up-stream. From one was hatched a woman and from the other a snake. "The snake went down the current until it arrived at the place where the sea and the river meet. There it blew up and a man emerged from its carcass."

The *limokon* (dove) has thus a close relation to the Mandaya as an ancestress, from whose eggs their "first parents" emerged. It is their oracular bird.

"A traveller on the trail, hearing the cooing of this bird, at once doubles his fist and points it in the direction from whence the sound came. If this causes the hand to point to the right side it is a sign that success will attend the journey. If, however, it points to the left, in front, or in back, the Mandaya knows that the omen bird is warning him of danger or failure, and he delays or gives up his mission."

The bird does not receive offerings, nor is it regarded as a spirit, "but rather as a messenger from the spirit world". If the bird is molested, the guilty individual is, the Mandaya believe, sure to die. Ill fortune is foretold by another bird called *wak-wak* which resembles a crow, and is heard at night.<sup>1</sup>

The snake and dove appear to have been closely associated in ancient times. According to the Bila-an ("dwellers in the back country") "a snake crossing the trail is an imperative order for the traveller to turn back; the call of the *limokon* is likewise a warning".<sup>2</sup>

The Atá people of Mindanao, an early invading people who intermarried with Negritos and later with other tribes, regard Manama as the greatest of all spirits and pay heed to the "voices of birds":

"If the dove *limokon* calls on the left side of the trail the party will refuse to proceed, unless another *limokon* answers the call from the right side of the path."<sup>3</sup>

Serpent-dragons are prominent in the myths of Central Indonesia. Some figure as water-confiners who cause floods.

The creation myth of the Dyaks of Sakarran in Borneo has a decidedly Hindu complexion. As Vishnu

<sup>1</sup> Fay-Cooper Cole, *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, Chicago, 1913, pp. 173-177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1913, p. 164.



sleeps on a serpent in the void after the old universe is dissolved, and before the new universe takes shape, so does the Dyak creator. The Rev. A. Horsburgh<sup>1</sup> begins one version as follows:

"In the beginning existed in solitude Rajah Gantallah, possessed of a soul with organs for hearing, speaking, and seeing, but destitute of any other limbs or members; he rested upon a *lumbu*."

Horsburgh says that the Dyaks were unable to tell him what a "lumbu" is; apparently it is a serpent-dragon.

"By an act of his will Rajah Gantallah originated two birds, a male and a female, after which he did not directly produce any creature, his will taking effect through the instrumentality of these birds. They dwelt on the lumbu above, beneath, and around, in what was originally a void. Whilst dwelling upon it, they created first the sky, then the earth, and then the Batang Lupar—a large river in Borneo—which was the first of waters and the mother of rivers."

Leaving the "lumbu" the birds surveyed the earth and the sky. They found the earth was large and they scraped the earth into heaps, forming the mountains. Then they experimented in producing mankind. First they made trees, but failed to turn them into human beings. Then they made rocks, but although they shaped men from them the figures could not speak.

"They then took earth and, by the aid of water, moulded it into the form of a man, infusing into his veins the gum of the kumpang tree, which is of red colour. They called to him—he answered; they cut at him—blood flowed from his wounds; as the day waxed hot, sweat oozed through his skin. They gave him the name of Tannah Kumpok or 'Moulded Earth'."

<sup>1</sup> *Sketches in Borneo*, 1858, p. 20.



Another version tells that in the beginning Soutan (soul) dwelt in solitude and could see, hear, and speak, but had "no limbs, body, or members". The deity "lived on a ball", and "after some ages" created two great birds. These birds created sky and earth and the first man, Tanacompta who brought to life a female child. This female ultimately gave birth to offspring. When her family became numerous she raised the sky which had been too close to the earth, supporting it permanently on props.<sup>1</sup>

The Ibans (Sea Dyaks of Sarawak) have a creation myth in which a python figures as a water-confining dragon which causes a deluge.

It tells that one day search was being made by some individuals for certain vegetable food when they saw in the jungle what appeared to be the trunk of a tree. Having found some food they sat on this object when by chance one of them stuck a knife in it. Blood issued forth and then it was realized that the seeming trunk was the body of an immense python. The hungry fellows attacked the reptile, slew it, and cut off portions of the flesh which they began to cook.

But the slaying of the great python brought about a deluge. Rain fell heavily and continued falling without cessation for many days. The land became swampy and ultimately it was flooded. Day after day the water rose higher and higher until at length the only part of the land which remained unsubmerged was the lofty peak Tiang Laju in the Batang Lupar district. All human beings were drowned except one woman, and among the surviving animals were a dog and a rat.

The dog had found a place of shelter on the higher reaches of the mountain. There a thick creeper formed

<sup>1</sup> F. F. McDougall, *Transactions of the Ethnological Society*, 1863, II, p. 27.

a shelter and the wind caused it to rub against a tree which brought a certain degree of warmth.

The woman having entered the shelter beside the dog was interested to find how the friction of creeper and tree generated heat. She increased that friction by rubbing a piece of the creeper against wood. Sparks flew forth and she made a fire. It was thus that fire-making was first introduced.

The creeper was taken by the woman as her husband and a son was born. But the youngster had only a single leg, a single arm, a single eye. When he grew up he complained bitterly of his incompleteness.

The story of how he was made a whole man with two legs, two arms, and two eyes by the wind spirit is as follows:

One day, the half-man, whose name was Simpang Impang found in a hole some grains of rice which had been concealed by the rat. He placed the grains on a leaf so that they might dry. The rat then discovered its loss and demanded that the rice should be restored. Simpang Impang refused its request and the rat vowed that it would be revenged by robbing mankind of rice whenever opportunity offered.

The dispute was still being waged when the wind-spirit came on the scene and scattered the rice throughout the jungle.

Simpang Impang, accompanied by some of his companions, set out to search for the wind-spirit so that the rice might be restored.

After wandering about for several days, the half-man came to a tree on which birds sat picking off the buds as they emerged. This was an oracle tree and he asked it the way to the house of the wind-spirit. The tree gave him the necessary direction, and asked him to



request the wind-spirit to come and blow him down, because he had grown weary of the birds devouring his buds.

Simpang Impang went on his way, and he next met with a lake which asked him whither he was going. On being informed, the lake said that it longed for the wind-spirit to come and clear its outlet which had been blocked by a lump of gold. He promised to deliver the message.

Simpang Impang was next addressed by a clump of sugar-cane and a banana plant. These asked him to inform the wind-spirit that they desired to be given branches like other trees.

Continuing his search, Simpang Impang at length reached the home of the wind-spirit. He heard the roaring of the wind and the wind-spirit demanded to know the reason for his visit. He replied angrily that he wished to recover the grains of rice which had been blown away.

Among the Ibans a form of trial by ordeal is diving into water.

The wind-spirit proposed that the dispute should be settled by diving. It then leapt into water and soon came to the surface as a bubble.

Among Simpang's companions was a fish, and he asked it to dive for him, which it did very effectively.

The wind-spirit then proposed that there should be a trial by jumping. It leapt over the house, but the half-man called upon his companion, the swift, to jump and, rising from the ground, it leapt out of sight.

The wind spirit next proposed the idea of passing through a blow-pipe, and it went through with a whistling sound.

Simpang Impang thought he was beaten, but his



companion, the ant, came forward and entering the blow-pipe, passed through it.

The wind-spirit had no other trials to propose, but still refused to restore the grains of rice.

Then Simpang Impang seized the creeper fire-sticks, his father, and generating fire set in a blaze the house of the wind-spirit.

It was then that the wind-spirit was forced to conciliate Simpang Impang, and offered to make him a whole man. The offer was accepted and Simpang Impang was greatly pleased when he found he had two arms, two legs, and two eyes.

Then he delivered to the wind-spirit the messages of the tree, the lake, the sugar-cane, and the banana plant. The wind-spirit promised to grant the requests of all save those of the sugar-cane and banana plant, explaining that these were without branches because of the offences of human beings.<sup>1</sup>

Another version of this myth given by the Ibans of Sarawak is to the effect that once upon a time the rice-fields were greatly damaged one night. The cultivators were puzzled as to the cause of this because they could not detect the tracks of any animals. Accordingly they kept watch and they saw a gigantic serpent lowering itself from the sky and beginning to devour the crops. The watchers rushed out from their hiding-places and attacking the serpent cut off its head, thus killing it.

Next morning one of the men cut pieces from the serpent's body and cooked these for his breakfast. But no sooner had he partaken of the food than the sky was enveloped with dark clouds. Heavy rain began to fall soon afterwards and continued falling until all the land was flooded. The waters rose quickly and only those

<sup>1</sup> Hose and Macdougall, *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo*, Vol. II, pp. 144 et seq.

human beings and animals who escaped to the mountains survived the deluge.<sup>1</sup>

Another version of the snake myth is given by Mr. Ivor H. N. Evans.<sup>2</sup> He was making excavations at the site of the old Dusun hill village of Tudu in British Borneo when he was told that long ago some men of this village were searching for wood to make a fence when they found what appeared to be the trunk of a tree.

"They began to cut it with their chopping knives, intending to make a fence from it, but to their surprise blood came from the cuts. So they decided to walk along to one end of the trunk and see what it was. When they came to the end, they found that they had been cutting into a great snake and that the end of the 'trunk' was its head. They, therefore, made stakes, and driving them into the ground, bound the snake to them and killed it. Then they flayed the skin from the body, and taking it and the meat home, they made a great feast from its flesh. The skin of the snake they made into a great drum, and, while they were drinking, they beat the drum to try its sound; but for a long time the drum remained silent. At last, in the middle of the night, the drum began to sound of its own accord, '*Duk duk, Kagy; duk duk Kagyu!*'<sup>3</sup> Then came a great hurricane and swept away all the houses in the village; some of them were carried away out to sea together with the people in them; while others settled down at what is now Tempassuk village and elsewhere, and from them arose the present villages."

The hill on which the old village of Tudu was situated is about 1000 feet high. This gigantic snake-dragon appears to be identical with the snake-god of Rossel and Fiji. Another version of the serpent-killing myth tells that some Dyak women went into a jungle to search for young bamboo shoots to eat. Having gathered a quantity

<sup>1</sup> E. Dunn in *Anthropos*, I, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in Religion, Folklore and Custom in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula*, Cambridge, 1923, pp. 87 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Evans says that *Kagy* is Bajau for "hurricane" or "typhoon".



of shoots they sat down on what appeared to be the trunk of a fallen tree. As they pared the bamboo shoots "the tree began to bleed". Then they found that they had been sitting on a great boa-constrictor which was in a stupor. Some men arrived and they slew the reptile, cut it up, and carried home the flesh to eat.

The narrative continues:

"As they were frying the pieces of snake strange noises came from the pan, and at the same time it began to rain furiously. The rain continued until all the hills except the highest were covered and the world was drowned because the men killed and fried the snake. All mankind perished except one woman who fled to a very high mountain. There she found a dog lying at the foot of a jungle creeper, and, feeling the root of the creeper to be warm, she thought perhaps fire might be got out of it; so she took two pieces of its wood and rubbed them together and obtained fire; and thus arose the fire-drill and the first production of fire after the great flood."

The birth of Simpang Impang follows, and he sets out in quest of his other half.<sup>1</sup>

Stories of half-man are distributed throughout Indonesia, and appear to have had origin from Hindu mythology. In the *Mahābhārata*, for instance, we find reference to "ugly Vartikas of dreadful sight, having one wing, one eye, and one leg"; when they "vomit blood, facing the sun", a dreadful happening is believed to be at hand.<sup>2</sup>

The monster man with one arm, one leg, and one eye figures, too, in the folk-lore of the Scottish Highlands. Caoilte (Thin man), the swift runner, follows him in versions of the "Lay of the Smith", which tells that the monster had "one top eye in his forehead" (*'s don*

<sup>1</sup> H. Ling Roth, *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Vol. 1, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> *My Indian Myth and Legend*, p. 68.



*súil mhullach an clar-aodainn*) and that he took only "one step over each red glen". Another Fingalian story tells of a child-robbing giant who had one eye, one arm, and one leg.

In the Hindu *Mahābhārata*<sup>1</sup> is told the story of the wonderful birth of Jarāsandha. His father Vrihadratha, lord of the Magadhas, married the twin daughters of the King of Kāshi. Each queen gave birth to a "half-child". "And each . . . had one eye, one arm, one leg, half a stomach, half of a face, and half of an anus". The midwives wrapped up the fragmentary bodies, went out by a back door and left them at a crossing. There they were found by Jarā (identified with Grihadeva, the household goddess). She united the fragments and the child "closing his fists red as copper and inserting them into its mouth, began to roar terribly as rain-charged clouds". The boy grew up and became the heroic monarch Jarāsandha ("joined by Jarā").

In Hindu mythology the god Purusha divides himself to produce husband and wife. He thus remains as a male "only a half of himself as a split pea is of the whole".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Evans gives from British North Borneo a Dusun story of a "half-man". When born the boy-child had "only one arm, one leg, half a body, and half a head". The child grew up, speaking and doing evil. His mother scolded him for his wicked deeds and said he was a beast and only half a man. "Then he would be ashamed and think whence he could get his other half." He set out, at length, to search for the missing part of himself and in the end reached a village in which resided another "half-man". He himself was a left-sided man and the other was a right-sided man. He was advised to wrestle

<sup>1</sup> *Sabha Parva*, Section XVII.

<sup>2</sup> *Bṛihad Aranyaka Upanishad* (First Chapter, Third Brāhmana).

with the half-man he had found. "They wrestled together for a long time," runs the tale, "and at last they became one man." Then the "whole man" went to the village of the left-sided half-man and "his father and mother were very glad that their son had found his other half".<sup>1</sup>

A collection of half-man stories, gleaned from different parts of Indonesia, is given by Mr. W. J. Perry.<sup>2</sup> In Nias, Sumatra, an unmarried girl became pregnant and she told she had prayed to a sky-being to give her a child. On being asked how she would know the child came from the sky she answered: "The proof is that the child will be within me for nine years and that it will be a half. The other half is on high." After nine years the child was born, and in time "the boy went to the sky to find his other half".

In Roti, in the Timor region, the story is told of a half-boy being sent out to find the rest of himself. A woman, whom he meets, instructed him "to go on until he came to two rocks that butted together like goats, and that after passing between them, he would be in the sky world. He then was to seek for the house of the chief of the sky."

These "butting rocks" are met with in Melanesian tales of ghosts travelling to the sky-world, and in Buddhist-Japanese and Aztec (*Vatican Codex*) illustrations.

On reaching the sky-world, the chief ordered the half-boy to be killed and the pieces put in a shell. This was done and "when the shell was opened on the following evening, a well-shaped youth came out".<sup>3</sup>

Another Roti tale tells of a virtuous girl who would marry no one but herself. "She went into the bush, and,

<sup>1</sup> Ivor H. N. Evans, *Studies in Religion, Folk-lore and Custom, &c.*, pp. 92-3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia*, Manchester, 1918, pp. 120 et seq.



while the thunder and lightning came to the right and left of her, she was split into a man and a woman who married so that they should not commit adultery."

A third Roti tale is of a young man who in the bush induced a slave to cut him into two parts. "After three days the slave came back and found that the youth had become two persons, a white youth and a white maiden. They married."

From Hamahera island comes the tale of a woman who was sad because she had given birth to a half-child. The child grew up and crossed the sea. He reached an island and was told to land and go to a certain house. There he found his other half and he was joined to him. Then "half of him was of gold and the other of precious stones". Mr. Perry refers to another tale in the same area in which the joined man is "half gold and half silver".

In Sangir island a woman is punished for "evil speaking and swearing" by becoming the mother of a "half-son".

The Bagobo tribe of the Philippines believe that the stars, thunder, and lightning are signs belonging to the sky spirits. A half-man myth is enshrined in the belief that the constellation Marara "is a one-legged and one-armed man who sometimes causes cloudy weather at planting time so that people may not see his deformities".<sup>1</sup>

The Ifugas of the Philippines tell of Bagan, a sky-girl, who came down to earth and married a man named Kinggauan and gave birth to a son. The people made life unpleasant for her and she resolved to return to the sky-world. She took her child with her, but the rope she used to pull up her husband was severed and he had to remain upon the earth. She returned to consult with

<sup>1</sup> Fay-Cooper Cole, *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, Chicago, 1913, p. 108.



her husband regarding their child, which they agreed to cut into two parts. Her part became a sky-being, but the earth part decayed. Bugan descended and scolded her husband for not animating his part. From that corrupted remnant she made "all sorts of creatures, most of them being pests and things of evil omen".

The Benguet Igorot tell of Dumagid, a sky-man, who married a woman of their tribe. A son named Obug was born. Dumagid went to the sky and his wife, who insisted on going with him, was killed by the heat. When Dumagid came down for his son, the people refused his request. Then he cut his son's body into two parts. Taking one part to the sky-world he animated it, but the other part was not animated but left to rot. He again descended and made a beautiful boy out of the decayed part.

"Then making the two boys stand in front of the people, he asked the boy whom he had taken to the sky to talk. The boy spoke in a voice which sounded like sharp thunder and the people were very frightened. Then Dumagid asked the other boy to talk, and he spoke with a sound like rolling thunder. Then the first boy went up to the sky, whirling like fire and thundered there. It is believed that this is the origin of the lightning and the sharp thunder which comes after it, and it is believed that the low thunder is the voice of the boy who was made on the earth."

A myth from the Philippines tells of a being named Si Marendor, "said to be half-stone and half sky-born". Mr. Perry<sup>1</sup> says he is supposed to be the same person as Kerito, another sun-lord "who is half-human and half-stone".

In these tales of half-men, which appear to have an immediate history rooted in India, is to be found the ancient Egyptian belief that "life is in the sky". The

<sup>1</sup> *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia*, Manchester, 1918, p. 91.

animating of the split children is reminiscent of mummification doctrines.

A wonderful person named Maengkom is known in the folk lore of Minahassa, Northern Celebes. It is told that he started on a journey "riding upon half a pig". He visited a number of towns until he came to the Rembokan (Tondano) lake "when the half-pig turned into a canoe". He went on his way performing various wonders such as transforming a man into a rock, cutting through a cape and forming an island and passing through a mountain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hickson, *A Naturalist in the North Celebes*, p. 308.

## CHAPTER XVII

### Origin Myths of Indonesia

Serpents and Stone—Hindu Connexion—Stones as "Dragon's Eggs" in China and Japan—Lore of Dragons and Megaliths in Indonesia—Nias Creation Myth—Earth-egg and the Scales—The Air of Life—Earth Resting on Snake-ring—Wind Fertilizing Myth of Minahassa—Birth from Rock—God and Goddess Cults of Minahassa—Human Beings descended from Goddess—Wangi born from Coco-nut—Earth Images of First Parents—The Atlas Pig—Earth Woman taken to Sky World—She is Sacrificed as a Pig—Origin of Heavenly Bodies—Memory of Mummification Doctrines—Dyak Creatrix as a Frog—Frog and Birth—Worship of Copper Frog-god—Frog-mother of the Philippines—Her Daughter as Sky-girl who makes Intoxicating Drink—Dusun Rock Myth—Earth Images—Sacrifice of Child to produce Food—Smallpox Deity in Creation Myth—The Immortal Snake—Parrot Messenger of God—First Parents from Wood and Stone—Births from Stone and Sea-foam—Formosan Sun-stone—First Parents born from it—Controlling the Sun—Ancestors from Distant Lands—Stars as Stones—Why Fire entered Bamboo, Stone, and Iron—Dragon Stories—Japanese and Irish examples—Dragon Heroes of Luzon—Miraculous Births—Children Strengthened by Water as are Dragons—The Dragon Boy—The Boy in the Stone.

In the Hindu sacred writings we find references to the arbitrary religious connexion between *Nāgas* (snake deities) and stones. The *Bṛihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, for instance, refers to the Creator entering the world as a man enters a village, or a snake enters a stone. The snake is regarded "as a modification of the stone, because, according to the Védānta, both are productions of the five elements; therefore", as a commentator says, "there is no contradiction in considering the snake a modification of the five elements which abide in a stone".



As De Visser has shown, the connexion between stone and the serpent dragon is found in China and Japan. "Dragon's eggs," he writes, "are beautiful stones picked up in the mountains or at the river side, and preserved till they split amidst thunder, rain, and darkness, and the young dragon ascends to the sky. Much water comes out of the stones beforehand, and the dragon appears in the form of a very small snake, or water-lizard, which grows larger in a few moments." Dragon's eggs are "found in times of heavy rains".<sup>1</sup> Tide stones, islands, mountains, trees, &c., are connected with dragons.<sup>2</sup>

In Indonesia we find, among the origin myths, that the dragon-stone beliefs have been fused with the myths connected with megaliths. Human beings and deities emerge from stone as do the serpent-dragons. We also find that, as trees have dragon spirits, so they may hold the spirits of anthropomorphic deities or human beings.

Mixed with the dragon and megalithic lore in some areas are myths about the mystical pig and the frog deity. In ancient Egypt the frog was a symbol or deity connected with mummification—with the rebirth of the dead king who was "made a god" by having his sin-containing entrails removed and his body embalmed. One of the mummification ceremonies was the restoration of the breath of life. The image of the dead was also animated. In Indonesia we have many myths about the making of the images of human beings which were afterwards animated by the wind, by breath from the sky world, or by the breath of the creating deity.

Mrs. Violet Clifton of Lytham in one of her delightful books of travel,<sup>3</sup> gives a creation poem of Nias, an island off Sumatra, which was collected by a German missionary.

<sup>1</sup> M. W. De Visser, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, Amsterdam, 1913, pp. 88 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 200, and 227 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> *Islands of Queen Wilhelmina*, London, 1927, pp. 82 et seq.

The "highest god" is named Lolo Zaho, and it is told that one day he saw his reflection in the water. He took a handful of earth "as big as an egg" and formed it "like the image of an ancestor . . . like to a child". The poem proceeds:

He fetched the scales of the measure,  
He fetched the weights shaped like a hen,  
He laid it on the scales of the measure to weigh it.  
He weighed the wind against the gold-dust,  
He weighed the wind against the gold.

Then he laid himself on the lips,  
He laid himself down to give out breath,  
Then "it" spake like a child,  
Then he spake like a man,  
Spoke before the highest God,  
Up there before Lolo Zaho.

The God gave to the man a name,  
He gave a name when he was there.  
Sihai de droben who has no descendants.  
Sihai de droben who has no children.  
And then rose up the highest God,  
And then rose up the great Lolo Zaho.

The men of Nias were heard by the missionary reciting this poem while standing round the dead body of a chief.

Mrs. Clifton summarizes another Nias myth as follows:

"The people are born of the winds and air. . . . Thirty winds met and gave life to two great trees set with fruit. From the fruits of one came the spirit of God, Lowalangi, from the other came that of Satan, Atocha. From the divine tree came also other shining spirits and gods, but from the vile tree came evil powers. Also the great gods Balin and Barasiluluo sprang from the tree of Lowalangi. . .



Barasiluluo made a man and Balin added to him a soul, and they called him Tuha Nilolo. He had many children and they lived on planes above the earth, of which there are eight. At last one forged the earth, but the foundations were not strong, and before the work was done the whole was destroyed in a mighty fall.

Mrs. Clifton goes on to tell of the second and successful making of the earth by another celestial. He laid at the foundations his mother's ring and coco-nut leaves.

"But Silewa, the mother of the earth's creator, changed her ring into a snake which still lies under the earth. When it turns, the earth shakes."

Another version of the earthquake myth is that the ancestors of the people of Nias move about uneasily in the earth. When the people feel an earthquake they run out and cry: "Great fathers, cause it to be not over terrible."<sup>1</sup>

This form of the earthquake myth is found in Melanesia.

The wind-fertilizing myth, given by Mrs. Clifton, may be compared to one which Dr. Sydney J. Hickson gives from Minahassa, Northern Celebes.

It tells that the goddess Lumimuūt was born in a canoe. When she left her parents she took with her a handful of earth which she threw on the sea to the great god saying: "If I am indeed your offspring let a great land arise where I can live." Her prayer was heard and land appeared. Then she struck a great rock which split in two, giving birth to the priestess Kareima.

"After some days Kareima said to Lumimuūt, 'Turn your face to the south!'

"While she did this the priestess prayed: 'O Cause of the south wind, fertilize this woman.'

"Lumimuūt, however, perceived nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Clifton, *Islands of Queen Wilhelmina*, London, 1927, pp. 34-5.



"Then on the command of the priestess, she turned to the east, to the north, and finally to the west, and each time the priestess prayed that the deity of the wind would fertilize her.

"Her prayer was answered, and Lumimutit by the god of the west wind begat a son named Toar."

Toar is "Husband of his mother" in this myth. Their children multiplied and "divided the country amongst them".

We meet in Minahassa, as in Nias, with the myth of the earth resting upon a gigantic snake. Dr. Hickson notes that this myth is also known to the inhabitants of Roti island, the Bataks, and the Fijians.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting fact is that in Northern Minahassa "the principal deity and her first offspring are represented as women", while in Southern Minahassa the principal deity and the first human being are males. "In the northern districts," says Dr. Hickson, "the priests were chiefly men, but in the south they were principally women."<sup>2</sup>

The principal deity of the northern area was Lumimutit, "the universal mother of all men". Most of her divine family dwell in four villages in the sky-world, called Kasosoran, Kalawakan, Kasendukan, and Karon-doran. Some of the deities, however, dwell in the lower regions. "Thus, the Makawalang dwells in the Underworld, Saputan dwells in the volcano of that name, Rumengan dwells in the Mahawu and Pinoutoan up the Lokon."<sup>3</sup>

There is a god of agriculture named Mandej and a god named Mualongan who combated with the sakits (evil spirits), the bringers of sickness and bad luck. In addition there were guardian spirits which have been

<sup>1</sup> Sydney J. Hickson, *A Naturalist in North Celebes*, London, 1889, pp. 241-44.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 247 and 254.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248 et seq.

compared by N. P. Wilken to the "genii of the Romans". Hickson, quoting Wilken, writes:

"Each man had an empungrengarengan, who was born with him and grew up with him, who accompanied him on all his journeys, and was ever present to protect him against injury, evil spirits, and sickness."<sup>1</sup>

The southern chief deity is the empung (grandfather<sup>2</sup>) named Wailan wangko. In the beginning he was alone in the world, according to the myth given by a Dutch missionary.<sup>3</sup>

"An island became visible, which rose from the water. A coco-nut tree was cast upon the island, and a tree grew there called Mahawatu. Then the empung Wailan wangko took the coco-nut tree which had been driven ashore and broke it in two, when lo! a man came out, whom the god called Wangi."

The god climbed into the tree and told the first man to remain upon the earth. But Wangi grew weary in the solitude, and climbing up the tree asked why he was being left by himself. The god then commanded him to return to the earth and make two figures, one of a man and the other of a woman. This Wangi did, but although the figures he made could walk about, they were unable to speak. He climbed up to the god again to complain of the speechlessness of the first human pair.

"Then the empung Wailan wangko said to Wangi, 'Take this ginger and blow it into the skulls and ears of your figures that they may speak, and give them names also; to the man you shall give the name Adam and to the woman the name Ewa'."

It is evident that the names Adam and Ewa have been adopted from the Dutch missionaries.

<sup>1</sup> Sydney J. Hickson, *A Naturalist in North Celebes*, London, 1839, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> Grandfather is the generic name for gods. The Hindu Brahma is also "grandfather".

<sup>3</sup> N. Graafland, *De Minahassa, Wyt en Zoenen*, Rotterdam, 1867.



As we have seen, the pig was a mystical animal to the Minahassers. The earth-supporting Atlas is a pig in certain myths as the gigantic snake is in others. A curious myth regarding the origin of the heavenly bodies identifies a woman with a pig. Her name is Lingkambene and she lived at Kinupit with her parents in a house which was reached by a ladder. N. P. Wilken gives her story in one of his publications dated 1863. It tells that she took part in singing and dancing until after midnight. When she returned home she found that the ladder was drawn up. She cried to her mother, father, grandfather, and grandmother to let the ladder down but they did not do so. Then she called to her brothers and sisters and to her uncle and her aunt, but none of them stirred to lower the ladder. Then she prayed to the sky deity Rimassa to lower the ladder. Her prayer was answered. She saw a golden chair suspended by golden chains being lowered from the sky. She waited till the chair reached the earth, and then, seating herself in it, she prayed: "O Rimassa, take me on high." As she was being raised up, she called to her relatives bidding them farewell. They were deeply distressed and offered to have nine pigs slaughtered for her if she would return, but she answered: "It is too late, too late, I have no more need of them."

She was drawn up to the sky-world. Dr. Hickson proceeds with his summary of the myth:

"When she arrived at the heavenly village of Kasendukan, her hands and her feet were bound together, and a stick of the Lahendong tree passed through them,<sup>1</sup> and thus she was carried to the river and there washed. Then she was killed, roasted, scraped, again washed, cut open, and her entrails removed—treated, in fact, just like a slaughtered pig. But all this painful treatment redounded to her honour. For from her forehead and face arose

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hickson points out that "this is the method of binding pigs, which was formerly employed in Minahassa".



the sun, from the back of her head arose the moon (the spots on the moon are the wounds she had on her head), her right eye became the star of the year, her left eye the star Pamusis, her heart the morning star, her liver became the three stars, her lungs the seven stars, and her body, which was chopped into fine pieces, became the other stars. The glow-worms received their lights from the scraps that fell from the chopping-block."<sup>1</sup>

It may be that in this pig-woman story is to be traced the influence of the doctrines connected with mummification. It may be compared with another story told by the Bagobo tribe of the Philippines. It sets forth that a man paid a visit to the sky world. He looked down on the land below, whereupon "all of the spirits made fun of him and said *they would take out his intestines so that he would be like one of them and never die*. The man refused to let them, and he wanted to go back home because he was afraid, so Manama<sup>2</sup> said to let him go." He was lowered to the earth by a grass-rope, but he became transformed into an owl.<sup>3</sup>

A Dyak myth refers to the female spirit Salampandai as "the maker of men". Some believe she made them of her own accord: others that she did so at the command of the chief god. First she made a man of stone, but the figure could not speak and was rejected. Iron was used next but was similarly a failure. Then man was made of clay and had the power of speech.

This goddess is reputed to appear in frog form. If a frog enters a Dyak house, a sacrifice is offered to it. "The creature is supposed," says H. Ling Roth, "to be somewhere near the house whenever a child is born; if it approaches from behind, they say the child will be a girl; if in front, a boy."

<sup>1</sup> *A Naturalist in the Celebes*, pp. 244-5.

<sup>2</sup> The chief sky spirit.

<sup>3</sup> *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*, Chicago, 1913, p. 127.

Mr. Noel Denison, in an interesting account of the Siju idol,<sup>1</sup> says that, according to the information he received, it is of copper "in the shape of a frog, or as some will have it, a man seated cross-legged about the size of a frog".

A legend tells that Siju was a Dyak who died in Java where his body was buried. When, however, his brothers went to sail home, they found that their boat would not move. One said that the spirit of Siju was detaining them. The brothers consequently disinterred the body and carried it home.

In a dream Siju appeared to one of the brothers, saying that a feast should be held and announcing that he would appear before all present.

Siju duly appeared at the feast, and promised that if they cared for and tended him, he would always lead them to victory and protect them and their children from sickness and evil.

"After this feast Siju died again, and from this time he always appears on the scene in the shape of a copper frog."

When enemies tried to get possession of the idol, they suffered greatly. "In fact, whosoever laid hands on the idol died." The idol is kept concealed in a box in the roof of a building containing gongs and skulls.

Mr. Denison goes on to say:

"Once in every four years a great feast is held at Serin in honour of Siju. This year the feast had been conducted on a large scale and no less than 24 pigs were sacrificed. Unfortunately I arrived too late to be present, but I was told that on these occasions Siju, or the idol, is taken down from the roof of the panggá where it is kept, and divested of the bark of the pisang tree which covers the box in which the idol is preserved.

<sup>1</sup> Jottings made during a tour amongst the Land Dyaks of Upper Sarawak, Borneo, during the year 1874. Singapore, p. 78.



"The idol is then taken out of the box, and, at the place of worship, the white cloth, in which it is wrapped, is unrolled, a cup full of coco-nut water, mixed with the leaves of the sekadip and piningat plants being placed at a little distance off.

"Siju, say the Dyaks, jumps into the cup and proceeds to bathe, being aided by the elders, who brush him with fowl's feathers, and, when his ablutions are finished, the water in which he has bathed is sprinkled over the heads of the assembled people.

"No one but the three head-men is permitted to see Siju in his bath, or, in fact, see him at all; they alone may enter the pangga where Siju is preserved and there kept in their charge."

In my *Myths of the South Sea Islands*<sup>1</sup> I give evidence which suggests that the frog deity was the prototype of the Maori "tiki".

A frog mother appears in a myth of the Tinguian, a pagan tribe in north-western Luzon in the Philippines. It tells of a man who was slain and cut up by a giant. His posthumous son collects the fragments of his father's body and restores him to life as in Egyptian mythology the fragments of the mutilated body of Osiris, who had been slain by Set, are collected by Isis and restored to life by Horus, posthumous son of Osiris. Father and son return home. The father one day went for a walk towards a brook:

"When he reached the brook he sat down on a stone and the big frog went to lap up his spittle. Not long after the big frog had a little baby. Not long after she gave birth, and the *anitos* (spirits) went to get the little baby and flew away with it. They used their power so that the baby grew fast and it was a girl, and they taught her how to make *dawak*.<sup>2</sup> Not long after the girl knew how to make *dawak*, and every time she rang the dish to summon the spirits."

She dwells in the sky world and her brother assumes

<sup>1</sup> 1, pp. 293 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> A sugar-cane rum.



bird shape and visits her. When she visits the earth young men fall in love with her because she is so comely, and they begin to fight about her. Her brother has to take her back to the sky world.<sup>1</sup>

A Dusun creation myth tells that at the beginning there was a waste of water and in it a great rock on which were a man and a woman—Kinharingan and Munsumundok (the chief Dusun god and his wife). Both were dirty, and when they washed themselves the dirt from their bodies became land.

"Then the man and woman made a stone in the shape of a man, but the stone could not talk, so they made a wooden figure, and when it was made it talked, though not long after it became worn out and rotten; afterwards they made a man of earth, and people are descended from this till the present day and from the other earth-men which they made at the same time. The man and the woman began to think in what way they could give food to their men, but they could not get anything, as there was no food in the world. Then the woman gave birth to a child, and the man said to the woman, 'How are we to give food to our men?' The woman wanted to kill the child. So they killed it, and when they had cut it to bits, they planted it in the ground; after a time its blood gave rise to rice, its head to a coco-nut, its fingers to betel-nut, its ears to the *sirih*-vine, its feet to Indian corn, its skin to a gourd-vine, and the rest of its body to other things good to eat. Its throat also became sugar cane and its knees *kaladi* (*Caladium esculentum*)."

Another version of the myth tells that the god and goddess procured earth from Bisagit, the spirit of small-pox. They pounded rock and mixed it with this earth and land was thus formed. Then the god made the Dusuns and the goddess made the sky. They afterwards made the heavenly bodies. A girl child was born to them,

<sup>1</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915, pp. 98 et seq.





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# PORTABLE CRADLES IN BORNEO

Ornamented with beads, bells, and other amulets to ward off evil and sickness.



By courtesy of H. F. Talbot, Borneo, Holland.



and they killed her and cut her up. From different portions of her body grew up "all things good to eat". All the animals had origin from the child's body as well.

The myth goes on to tell that when all living beings came into existence the god asked: "Who is able to cast off his skin?" adding: "If anyone can do so, he shall not die." The snake alone heard, saying: "I can." That is why "the snake does not die unless killed by man".

In another Dusun version the god Kinharingan has a bird messenger like Tangaloa in the Samoan myths. This is Toripos, a small green parrot. It bargains with the smallpox spirit for earth which it carries to the god. But the condition made is that the smallpox spirit should have half the people. That is why so many people die periodically of the smallpox disease.

Kinharingan announces in the end that he is to return to the sky, and he informs the people that if they have a visitation of smallpox or any other disease, they must chant religious formulas to gain relief.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. W. J. Perry quotes from Bastian a Borneo myth which tells that the Pari (a term which is a corruption of "padi" and denotes a rice-growing people, "worship the creator Minjanni, who, with Sempulon, made men and animals out of stone").<sup>2</sup>

According to Kruijt, the Posso-Todjo Toradja of the Celebes have a creation myth which tells of sky-beings carving images of human beings. They returned to the sky to fetch thence the breath of life with which to animate them. "While they were gone, the images were animated by the wind."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ivan H. N. Evans, *Religion, Folk-Lore and Customs in North Borneo, etc.*, Cambridge, 1923, pp. 45 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Megakethic Culture in Indonesia*, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

The Posso-Todjo Toradjo of the Celebes tell that the first human pair were made in the form of stone images. While the divine sculptors were in the sky whence they went to obtain "eternal breath" for the images, the wind blew upon them and they became living human beings.<sup>1</sup>

In a myth from south-east Borneo a similar incident occurs. The first portion of earth was spread out by a serpent which swam in the waste of waters. Then a sky being descends and finds seven eggs made of earth. In one he found a man and in another a woman, but they were lifeless. He returned to the sky to obtain breath, but during his absence another deity descended and blew the air of life into the mouths of the man and the woman.<sup>2</sup>

There are myths of human beings emerging from stones and rocks. According to Schwarz the Tontemboan of Minahassa tell of a stone which emerged from the ground somewhere in the east. When the sun rose the stone became so hot that it sweated. From a lump that grew upon it came forth Lumimu'ut, the ancestress of the Tontemboan tribe. Mr. Perry summarizes other versions of the myth:

"There was once a stone as large as a house in the middle of the sea. The waves played over it and after a time a crow emerged. The stone then sweated and out came Lumimu'ut.

"According to a Toumpakewa version, a sky-being made the earth and caused all things to grow. It happened one day that the south wind was blowing, so that a large mass of foam was carried by the waves and finally left high and dry on the shore. Day after day the sun shone upon the foam till it began to move and work itself deeper into the sand. Finally it gave birth to a youth."

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Perry, *Megalithic Culture in Indonesia*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> C. A. L. M. Schwane, *Borneo*, Vol. I, p. 177.



The youth subsequently found a small girl who had been sweated out of a stone to which still remained attached her navel string, which he cut with a bamboo knife. Her name was Lumimu'ut, and he married her. According to the myth she had been produced by "the friction of two stones". Mr. Perry says that the Toumpakewa suppose that two stone images on a hill are Lumimu'ut and To'ar "the ancestors of the Minahassa peoples".<sup>1</sup>

In the Timor area the ancestors of the Patumera (red stone) clan are said to have emerged from a stone which had been fished out of the sea. A Formosa myth told by the Taiyal, a mountain tribe, is to the effect that a rock split and out of it came the first man and woman. In southern Formosa another tribal myth tells of a rock which was born of the sun and was lowered down to the top of Mount Diabu, which is 10,660 feet high. From a fissure in this rock came forth the first man and woman. There are various versions of this myth.<sup>2</sup>

The Pujuma people of Formosa account for their origin as follows:

"In very ancient days there existed a large stone at the foot of Mt. Aravanai (southern extremity of Pinan plain). On an eventful day, however, this stone burst and gave birth to a man and a woman, called Unai and Tanval respectively. The two marched northward as far as Chipun river, where they settled and founded a tribe called Chipun. The two now married and gave birth to three boys and three girls, whose descendants became the ancestors of the different tribes of the present Puyuma group. There were then eight suns in heaven, and the heat from them was so excessively strong that people suffered greatly from it. The first son of Unai, called Saicahao, made a ladder of grass, ascended to heaven, and, battling with the suns, destroyed six of them, leaving two—the present sun and moon."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Perry, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>3</sup> J. W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, London, 1903, p. 578.



We have here, apparently, the Maui Polynesian myth of sun controlling mixed with a memory of the doctrine of the mythical Ages of the World.

The Ami tribe of Formosa have two different types of stories to account for their origin. One is to the effect that their "first parents" emerged from a stone. These were Tiruti and Tihongan and they founded the village called Varangao. Four brothers of the family crossed the Pinan river and became ancestors of the tribe to the north of it.

There is also the traditional story which tells of the arrival of ancestors from distant lands. One of the Ami tribes occupying the valley of the Shukoran river say they originally came from the island of Sanasanc, arriving in boats.

"The Riru tribe of Kirai district of the northern Amis state that their forefathers originally lived on an island to the east of Formosa. One savage, called Tipots, and his family were out at sea in two canoes when a terrific gale arose, sweeping them away from their homeland and wrecking them on the coast of Formosa where they built houses and gave life to the present Riru tribe. This tribe possesses an old canoe which they claim is the model of the one used by their forefathers. At present, the village people once a year put the canoe into the sea and mimic the landing of their ancestors. After this ceremony, the spirits of their departed ancestors are worshipped.

"A more fanciful tradition is to the effect that their ancestors came from over the sea on the back of a large tortoise."<sup>1</sup>

A similar tradition exists among the savage villagers of Botel Tobago. It tells of the arrival of strangers who had been driven across the sea during a storm from the islands which they call "Ibatan" and "Ikubarat".<sup>2</sup>

A Dyak deluge myth makes a man named Trow

<sup>1</sup> J. W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa*, London, 1903, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 390.

escape in a boat with some animals. When the waters had subsided he created women, one from a log of wood, another from a stone, and others from various articles. He married them and had in time a family of twenty, the ancestors of the *Tringus Dyaks*.<sup>1</sup>

The Tinguian, a pagan tribe in north-western Luzon in the Philippines, have, according to Fay-Cooper Cole, a myth which tells that "the earth, which is very flat, was made by the great spirit Kadaklan", who also made the sun and moon "which chase each other over and under the earth. Sometimes the moon almost catches the sun, but it always gets tired and gives up before it succeeds." The stars are referred to as stones, and, with the sun and moon, are "the lights of Kadaklan". Lightning is "the dog of Kadaklan".<sup>2</sup>

A Tinguian myth sets forth:

"Kaboniyon once sent a flood which covered all the land. There was no place for the fire to go, so it went into the bamboo, the stones and the iron. Now that is why you can get fire out of the bamboo and stones."<sup>3</sup>

There are many stories outside the Indonesia area of dragons being small and weakly until they come into contact with water; then they grow rapidly and perform great feats as bringers of thunderstorms, whirlwinds, as carriers of kings or saints. In Japan, for instance, a Tengu (as a Garuda) carries off a dragon (as a snake) and drops it into a cleft of dry rock to die miserably. The Tengu next carries off a priest who has a pitcher in his hand, and deposits him in the same cleft. There is, however, a drop of water in the pitcher and it strengthens the dragon, which transforms itself into a little boy,

<sup>1</sup> C. T. C. Grant, *A Tour Amongst the Dyaks of Sarawak, Borneo in 1858*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.



flies through the air with the priest on his back, and puts him safely down at his house. It afterwards avenges itself on the Tengu.<sup>1</sup>

An Irish folk-story tells of a small worm which creeps out of the thigh bone of a Hag whose body has been broken in pieces. The worm is thrown into Loch Derg and immediately becomes an enormous beast which "overran the country, spreading destruction on every side, and swallowing hundreds of people at a mouthful".<sup>2</sup>

The influence of the dragon myth is to be traced in Philippine folk-tales of young heroes who grow rapidly in stature and strength when they touch water. As a rule these heroes are of miraculous birth. A story of the Tinguian of north-western Luzon tells of a woman who is carried to the sky by a vine which had twined itself about her body. She becomes the bride of the sun in the sky-world, and then returns to the earth. Some time afterwards she asked her mother to "prick her little finger which itched". When her mother did so "out popped a pretty baby". The narrative proceeds:

"Every time they bathed the child they used magic so that it grew as often as they washed it, until it walked."

A festival is held, and the baby is left near the gate to discover his father. The sun appeared as a stone and carries the baby. "The people saw that he who carried the baby rolled because he was round, and they saw he was not a man but a stone." The woman was told to go away "to the town of the stone". She did so and on arriving there "the sun became a man, he who had been a stone before". The child grows large and his name is Kanag.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XXXVI, Part II, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *My Buddhism in Pre-Christian Britain*, pp. 127-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915, pp. 33 et seq.



The god Rongo of Central Polynesia was born from a boil on his mother's arm.<sup>1</sup> A Malay story tells of the birth of children from the calves of women's legs.<sup>2</sup> The Hindu Krishna is born from the head of Shiva as Minerva is from the head of Jupiter. In the mythical history of early China the emperors are dragon-men and sons of dragons, being born after their mothers saw a rainbow, or a light descending from a star or after an egg dropped by a swallow had been swallowed, or after treading in the footstep of a god.<sup>3</sup>

The Chinese dragon kings grow quickly and perform supernatural feats. In the tales from Luzon, the children who grow rapidly each time they are given a bath are famous heroes. One kills gigantic snakes and a gigantic bird which had carried away the father of the boy; another overcomes a giant who has slain his father and he restores his father to life. Another story tells of a rapidly growing child who is born from his mother's little finger. She had crossed the ocean on the back of a crocodile. In Japanese stories the woman-carrying crocodile is a *wani*, a form of the dragon.

Another boy, bearing the usual dragon-hero name of Kanag, born from an itching spot between his mother's fingers, grows rapidly with each bath. He performs great feats as a head-hunter and on his return dances, causing an earthquake, &c. His father slays him, but his mother restores him to life.<sup>4</sup>

Many of these tales from Luzon are fragmentary. One, for instance, tells of a boy who caught a small bird. His grandmother stole and ate it, and the boy exclaimed: "It is better I get lost." He went away.

<sup>1</sup> Gill, *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*, London, 1876, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Sicut and Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula*, Vol. II, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> *My Myths of China and Japan*, pp. 274 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Stories 10, 12, 13, 22, and 24.

"He came to a big stone called *balintogan* and said, 'Stone, open your mouth and eat me'. Then the stone opened its mouth and swallowed the boy.

"His grandmother went to find him and looked very much. When she came to the stone, it said, 'Here is'. She called the horses to come to the stone. They kicked it, but could not break. She called the carabao and they hooked it, but only broke their horns; then she called the chickens and they pecked it, but could not open. Then she called the thunder, but it could not help. Then her friends came to open the stone, but could not, so she went home without the boy."<sup>1</sup>

The myths connected with megaliths are thus found mingled with dragon lore from India and China. Thus in the folk-stories can be detected the various cultural influences which have left their traces among sections of the Indonesian peoples.

<sup>1</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, p. 197.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Dragon Jars and the "Mother Pot"

Sacred Jars of Indonesia—Chinese and Hindu Influences—Jars take place of Skulls—Jars in Folk-tales of Luzon—Hunting Oracular Jar—Jar and Frog as Oracles—Jars like Cattle—Multiplying Jars—Jars of Formosa—Origin of Jars in Sky World—Costly Jars in Japan—Miraculous Jars of Borneo—Sky-man's Jars become Fish, Deer, and Boars—Jars as Givers of Riches, Long Life, &c.—Chinese Dragons and Deer on Jars—Jars as Tribal Property—Famous Jars—Sultan's Oracular Jar—Water from Jars fertilize Fields—Jar Burials in Tumuli—Ancestral Spirits and Jars—Jars from Java—Male and Female Jars—Offerings to Jar Spirits of Ancestors—Dusuna got Jars from Sky—Jars in Creation Myth—Child-giving Jars—Spirit Jars of Indo-China—Longevity Jars in China—Jars in Dragon Worship—Chinese Connexions with Indonesia—Quest of Serpent Gem—Gourds and Jars—Borneo Story of Food-giving Gourds—The Mother Pot—Hindu Story of Multiplying Pot—Births from Gourds and Pots—The Celtic Holy Grail—Jar Burials in Indonesia—Babylonian Pottery Coffins—Mummy Jars of Egypt—Canopic Jars of Egypt and Maja Bacab Jars—Jar Burials in Anatolia and Syria—Hindu Jar Burials—South American Jar Burials—West African Soul-trapping Jars—Genii trapped in Jars—Cultural Drifts in East and West—Examples from Canary Islands and Britain—Survivals in Isolated Areas.

There are, in certain areas in Indonesia, folk tales, beliefs, and customs connected with sacred jars in which dwell spirits of ancestors, or forms of the dragon. Although many, if not all, of the ancient jars were manufactured in China, it does not follow that their religious associations are entirely of Chinese origin. The dragon of a sacred jar is sometimes referred to as a *nāja* or *nāga*, which is the Hindu name of the serpent deity or dragon, and, indeed, as De Visser has shown in his *The Dragon in China and Japan*, the prototype of the Chinese and



Japanese dragons. Buddhist influence from India imparted a distinctive character to these Chinese and Japanese bringers of rain, carriers of the gods and souls, and "life givers".

In Indonesia the influence of India, as well as that of China, is to be detected in the lore connected with the sacred jars. There is also evidence which indicates clearly that the jar-cult of Indonesia had a local development, having been fused there with religious beliefs connected with the invocation of ancestral spirits. Indeed, the jars are found in some cases to take the place of ancestral and other skulls, as mediums for communication with the spirit world.

Sacred jars are prominent in some of the folk-tales of Luzon and elsewhere in the Philippines, and the jar lore and customs can be traced to Borneo, to Java, and to India and beyond.<sup>1</sup>

The Tinguian people of Luzon tell in their folk stories of wonderful oracular jars. "Magsawi, my jar," runs one folk tale, "when it was not yet broken talked softly, but now its lines are broken and the low tones are insufficient for us to understand."

The teller of the story, from which I quote, assured the American collector, Fay-Cooper Cole, that "the jar was not made where the Chinese are", but came from the woods and mountains. One day his ancestors were out hunting with their dog, and saw the jar which the dog tried to catch. "Sometimes it disappeared," and "sometimes it appeared again." They turned homeward, but on their way heard a voice from the sky saying: "You secure a pig, a sow with young, and take its blood, so that you may catch the jar which your dog

<sup>1</sup> Fay-Cooper Cole, *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915; Rayo, *Folklore Filipino*, Manila, 1889; Jenks, *The Bontoc Igorot*, Manila, 1905; Seideradel, *The Language of the Bontoc Igorot*, Chicago, 1909; Tawney, *Kathā Sarit Sāgara*, Calcutta, 1880, &c.

pursued." They obeyed and when they had made the offering of blood the dog brought the jar to bay. "They plainly saw the jar go through a hole in the rock which is a cave, and there it was cornered so that they captured the pretty jar which is Magsawi." Cabildo, the owner of this famous talking jar, has told that he inherited it.<sup>1</sup> Throughout Indonesia the sacred jars are treasured heirlooms.

In one of the many stories told regarding the hero Kanag, he sets out with a companion to find "the perfume of Baliwán" desired by his sweetheart. They meet a *doldoli* (jar) which warns them not to proceed, lest their names alone should return. They are next warned by a frog. Kanag goes on, however, and finds the tree on which the perfume grows, but, on climbing it, he is transformed into a snake. He is afterwards taken to a magic well, the waters of which cause the snake skin to peel off.<sup>2</sup>

A story related by a native woman tells of a young couple who both possessed magical powers. After they married the man took his wife to a field where he kept many kinds of jars which behaved like cattle. As soon as they arrived "all the jars rolled around them and stuck out their tongues". The young woman was afraid that the jars would devour her husband and herself. When, however, the jars were fed they became quite peaceful.<sup>3</sup>

Another woman's story tells of an engagement of marriage. An earring was placed as a gift in a little jar which immediately "filled with gold".<sup>4</sup>

This was a multiplying jar. In a marriage story the guests are carried across a river on the backs of crocodiles. They were given liquor in a golden cup from "a little

<sup>1</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1915, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.



jar which looked like a fist " and yet the jar always remained a third full.<sup>1</sup>

Ayo, a woman who gave birth to three pigs which afterwards turned into boys, gave a feast. "When she put a grain of rice in each of the twelve big jars they were filled."<sup>2</sup>

The Tsalisen group of mountain tribes in Formosa worship the "manes" of their ancestors four times a year.

"Some Tsalisen tribes have a tradition that their ancestors came down from heaven with twelve earthen jars; and at the present day, in the house of a great chief a peculiar old earthen jar is handed down from generation to generation; others have a tradition that the moon gave birth to their ancestors, and in the house of a chief a round stone, circular in form, intended to represent the moon, is preserved. Both the jar and the stone are considered as sacred objects, and strangers are not permitted to approach them."

The Rev. W. Crossland, writing regarding sacred jars, says that "in looking over Carletti's *Voyage*, I find he mentions taking some sacred jars from the Philippine Islands to Japan, which were so prized there that the punishment of death was denounced against them if they were sold to anyone but the Government. Some, he says, were valued as high as £30,000."<sup>3</sup>

Of special interest are the sacred jars possessed by the Sea Dyaks of Borneo. According to Dr. Schwaner,<sup>4</sup> the *Blangas* (miraculous jars) are very highly prized by the natives, who display great anxiety to get possession of specimens although they may be involved in bitter quarrels and "extreme enmity" in realizing their desire.

<sup>1</sup> *Traditions of the Tinguian*, Chicago, 1913, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by H. Ling Roth, *Notices of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Vol. II, pp. 286-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Borneo*.



A legend tells that the jars were made at Majapahit in Java. The maker was Ratu Champa who had descended from the sky-world and made use of the clay left over after the creation of the earth, the sun, and the moon. The clay had been used in the formation of seven mountains.

Ratu Champa kept his jars in a mountain cave along with his weapons, gongs, &c., carefully guarding them. He married the daughter of a king and had a son who was named Radèn Tunyong. The narrative continues:

"Several disagreeable experiences caused Ratu Champa to leave the earth again and return to his native country, heaven. Before carrying out this scheme, however, he informed his son about the caves in the mountain, in which the pots, &c., were stored, and exhorted him to carefully guard them.

"The careless son, however, neglected the admonition of his father, and in consequence of this those jars, weapons, &c., escaped, and could not possibly be prevented in time. Some of them jumped into the sea and changed to a kind of fish, called *Tampaha*; others escaped to the woods and changed to deer and boars; the weapons became snakes, the gongs tortoises, &c. Nowadays it may happen that a fortunate hunter kills a head of game, sprung from such a vessel, whose shape is retransformed during the death agony into that of the original jar. . . .

"Besides the earth produced by *Atala*, of which these jars are made, Ratu Champa endowed it (the jar) with some hundreds of talismanic properties, providing the respective possessors with a variety of riches, and also securing to them the possession of distinction, valour, long life, domestic happiness, &c."<sup>1</sup>

According to Sir Spencer St. John<sup>2</sup> there are several kinds of sacred jars, but the best known are the Gusi,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schwane, quoted by H. Ling Roth in *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, London, 1896, Vol. II, pp. clxxvi et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Transactions of Ethnological Society*, II, 1863, p. 232, and *Life in the Forests of the Far East*, London, 1862.

the Rusa, and the Naga. He thinks they are all "most probably of Chinese origin", but Dr. Schwaner<sup>1</sup> says in this connexion:

"The Chinese have repeatedly tried to imitate them in China and sell them here (in Borneo) as the genuine article, but in spite of a striking resemblance the sharp eye of the native soon found out the fraud, and only a few of these so-called false Blangas are in existence."

On the exterior glazed surface of the jars are "monstrous images of dragons, with dolphins' heads, &c."

Sir Spencer St. John says that the Gusi jar is the most valuable. It is of green colour and about 18 inches high. Because of its reputed "medicinal properties" it is much sought after. Sir Spencer tells of one changing hands for a sum of £400.

The Naga jar is two feet in height and is "ornamented with Chinese figures of dragons", while the Rusa jar is covered with figures of "some kind of deer".

Mrs. McDougall tells that every Dyak tribe possesses some jars. "They are," she says, "large brown-coloured jars, with handles at the sides, and sometimes figures of dragons on them. No one would suppose, from their appearance, that they were worth more than the common earthen water-pots we use in our bath houses, but to the Dyaks they have the value of remote antiquity. They say their ancestors bequeathed them to them as the property of the tribe."<sup>2</sup>

According to Sir James Brooke the jars "are not held sacred by the Dyaks as objects of worship", but "are collected as proof of riches, in the same way that the paintings of old masters are in Europe".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, London, 1896, Vol. II, p. clixvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Sketches of our Life at Sarawak*, London, 1882, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Capt. Rodney Mundy, *Narrative of Events in Borneo and Celebes*, London, 1848, Vol. I, p. 354.



That the jars have to the Dyaks a deeper significance than is indicated by Sir James Brooke is made manifest by the evidence of the Rev. W. Crossland, who tells of a "famed sacred jar" possessed by the old Datu of Tamparuli. Another jar is about two feet in height and of a dark olive green colour. Both jars are filled with water, and the flowers and herbs placed in them are sold to people suffering from illness.

Mr. Crossland writes, too, of a remarkable jar possessed in his day by the Sultan of Brunei. It has not only "all the valuable properties of the other sacred vases, but speaks". The Sultan told regarding this oracular vessel:

"The night before his first wife died, it moaned sorrowfully, and on every occasion of impending misfortune it utters the same melancholy sounds."

Mr. Crossland thinks the sounds may be caused by the wind blowing over the mouth of the jar "which may be of some peculiar shape". The jar was kept "covered over with gold-embroidered brocade" and was "seldom exposed, except when about to be consulted". Mr. Crossland heard that "in former days the Muruts and Bisayas used to come with presents to the Sultan and obtain in return a little water from this sacred jar, with which to besprinkle their fields to ensure good crops".

Mr. G. W. Earl<sup>1</sup> writes of the tumuli met with in the island parts of the west coast of Borneo in which small earthen jars are sometimes found. These tumuli "are supposed by the Dyaks to be connected in some manner with the ashes of their forefathers". The jars

<sup>1</sup> "Narrative of a Voyage from Singapore to the West Coast of Borneo, 1834", in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. III, and *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago*, London, 1853, pp. 374-5.



are scarce among the Dyaks, who consult them "before they undertake any expedition". They believe an expedition "will be prosperous or the contrary according to the sound produced, probably by water being poured into it (a jar)". S. Muller, writing in a French work<sup>1</sup> regarding the Dyak jars, says that they were reputed to have come from the kingdom of Modjopahit in Java, but seemed to him to be of Chinese manufacture. He saw on them "certain figures of dragons with long tails" resembling figures on "ancient coins of Cochin China". The jars were, however, "very ancient" and "are not manufactured at the present day". Muller tells that some jars were male and others female. On two male jars he saw "two serpent-shaped dragons with three paws bent under them". Another male jar was adorned with two serpents with dragons' heads and four feet each. A female jar had as handles "four geckoes, each with four paws".<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Ivor H. N. Evans<sup>3</sup> has found that the Orang Dusun ("peoples of the orchards") of British North Borneo believe in jar spirits as well as spirits of rice, spirits of disease, ghosts, &c.

"If no offerings or sacrifices were made to the jar spirits, they would certainly take their revenge by bringing all sorts of misfortunes upon those who had slighted them."

The sacred jars are worshipped by the Dusuns of Tuaran, Papar, &c. They believe that "certain varieties of them are tenanted by indwelling spirits. At Tuaran the *Gusi* type of jar is sacrificed to and prayed to. Mr. Evans describes the *Gusi* as "a pot-bellied jar of a greenish

<sup>1</sup> C. J. Temminck, *Coup d'Œil Général sur les Possessions Néerlandaises dans l'Inde Archipelagique* (3 vols.), 1842-1849, Vol. II, Chapter, V, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth, *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Vol. II, p. 286 and note.

<sup>3</sup> *Religion, Folk-Lore and Custom in North Borneo*, &c., p. 3.



Xylophone from Java, of carved wood in form of a dragon. Metal keys.

Wooden figure of a dragon used as a seat by an inspired priestess when delivering oracles, Milanau, Borneo.



By permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

## THE DRAGON IN INDONESIAN ART





brown colour", apparently of "Chinese make". The spirit of an ancestor is reputed to dwell in each jar and must be propitiated with sacrifices. An old woman will go to a *Gusi* jar "and wipe its mouth, saying at the same time: 'Do not be angry with me for I have given you food' ". Mr. Evans goes on to say:

"The *Buluhen* is a kind of *Gusi* which the Dusuns say that Kinharangan let down to the earth by a cord from an open window in the sky. A species of banyan (*Ficus*) is reported to be the abode of a spirit, and it is said that men coming suddenly upon a tree of this kind have seen many *Gusis* standing below it, but when they have looked again, the jars have vanished for the spirit has snatched them up into the tree."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Schwaner gives a creation myth in which there is mention of the sacred jars.

"The Ot-danoms call the supreme being Mahadara. He created the earth and all that therein is. In the beginning there was nothing but water, and all endeavours to draw out the dry land remained fruitless, until at last seven Nagas (jars) are taken for a foundation, on to which basis Mahadara threw the earth down out of heaven. As formerly there was nothing but water, now the water and light are suppressed and the universe is overwhelmed with earth. Mahadara stepped down from his seat and pressed this together into a firm mass, stones, &c.; he formed the mountain ranges and heights, the depths of lakes and seas, the beds of rivers and brooks, so that the water now got its bed in the dry ground. Only after that were men made out of earth and the rest of creation developed."<sup>2</sup>

The Sirinan of Piasau in Tempassuk District formerly had spirit jars, but with the exception of a few known as *Sungkial* have sold them to Brunei traders. "We preferred the money," they told Mr. Evans, "to a jar which

<sup>1</sup> I. H. N. Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. ccl of Appendix.

contained a (potentially) evil spirit who demanded constant sacrifices."

A story is told of a man who had three kinds of sacred jars, each containing a spirit. He had no children, and one night a woman appeared to him in a dream who told him that if he wished for a child he would have to sacrifice to the jar spirits. He sacrificed and a child was born, and each year afterwards he propitiated and prayed to the jars.

Sacred jars, which are the habitations of spirits, are also found among the Bahnars, Sedangs, and Juraïs of Indo-China. Blood and rice wine are smeared on the mouths of these on holy days.<sup>1</sup>

Longevity jars and bowls were known in China, those of jade being most potent. Some jade sacrificial vessels were prototypes of those of porcelain made during the Sung dynasty. The vases of jade and bronze of later date than the Chou and Han periods are imitations of antique forms but "all religious symbolism connected with them is lost". The forms were imitated simply for "artistic and decorative purposes". Big jars for holding life-giving wine were kept by the Mongol emperors, and on them were three-clawed dragons. These vessels are reputed to be relics of the Tsin or T'ang period. Other and smaller jars were connected with the worship of the water-giving and life-giving dragon-god. These included flower vases of the K'ien-lung period (1736-1795). Some vessels are pea-green and brown, and were imitated in pottery.<sup>2</sup>

The adoption of the Chinese dragon-jars in the Philippines, Indo-China, and Indonesia was no doubt originally due to the influence of Chinese traders who

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> B. Laufer, *Jade*, Chicago, 1912, pp. 296-7 and 315 *et seq.*



were in search of life-giving articles. The Chinese ancient writings refer to two areas called Po-se. One of these was Persia, the other being the Po-se of the Southern Sea. The Malayan Po-se, a seafaring people, were in the first half of the eighth century trading with the Chinese at Canton. The incense of the southerners was preferred by the Chinese to that of southern India. In 992 an embassy arrived in China from Java. The Chinese imported aloes, cassia, &c., from Indonesia. The "bezoar" stone was imported from Borneo. It was supposed to cure disease, and was found in the stomach of a monkey or hedgehog. Dr. Laufer provides a good deal of evidence regarding the ancient Chinese trading connexions with Indonesia.<sup>1</sup>

There is evidence in the folklore of North Borneo regarding China's ancient commercial intercourse with the natives. Dalrymple<sup>2</sup> recorded in the eighteenth century the following legend which tells

"That the Emperor of China sent a great fleet for the stone of a snake which had its residence at Keeney-Baloo (Kina-Balu); that the number of people landed was so great as to form a continual chain from the sea, and when the snake's stone was stole it was handed from one to the other till it reached the boat, which immediately put off from the shore and carried the prize to the junks; they, immediately sailing, left all those who were ashore behind, though their dispatch was not enough to prevent the snake's pursuit, who came up with the junks and regained the treasure."

Mr. Earl<sup>3</sup> gives a different version of the legend which he heard seventy years after Dalrymple. It runs:

<sup>1</sup> *Sino-Iranica*, Chicago, 1919, pp. 468 et seq., and *Borneo, Java, Sumatra and Indo-China* in Index.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Dalrymple, *A Plan for Extending the Commerce of this Kingdom and of the East India Company*, London, 1769, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> G. W. Earl, *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago*, London, 1853.



"The serpent was found asleep, and the men were stationed in a line extending from the sea-coast into the centre of the island, so close to each other that the talisman could be passed from hand to hand until put on board the junks; but all these admirable arrangements were rendered of no avail by the clumsiness of the person appointed to steal the talisman, for the serpent awaking and seeing what was in the wind, raised such a dust that the junks were blown off the coast, and the long line of Celestials were left to colonize the country."

H. L. Roth,<sup>1</sup> quoting a German writer, states that the Dusuns say there is a large lake on the top of Kini-blau. It is watched by a *nāja* or dragon god.

"On an island in the middle of the lake there is a lovely Chinese princess held in strong durance by the *nāja*. Many handsome princes had tried in vain to rescue the unfortunate princess. To do this some had transformed themselves into birds, fishes, &c., but they were always destroyed by the *nāja*. The princess is only to be released by a very powerful man. But then danger threatened the Dusuns for the lake would overflow and the mountain fall to pieces."

The life-giving and food-giving gourd appears to have been of greater antiquity in Borneo than the Chinese dragon-jars. Mr. I. H. N. Evans<sup>2</sup> gives a story which tells of gourds possessed by a supernatural woman with a very big head and a neck no thicker than one's little finger. Her name, Ligat Liau, is said to mean "little neck". A man during a time of food scarcity met this woman while he was searching in the jungle for vegetables. Having at her request taken from her hair little snakes, scorpions, and centipedes, he receives from her seven gourds.<sup>3</sup> He took these home. The first when

<sup>1</sup> *Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, Vol. 1, pp. 304-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Religion, Folk-Lore and Custom in North Borneo*, &c., pp. 97 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> The Dravidian peoples of India still have their seven goddesses represented by seven pots. (Eliot Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 184 note.)

cut open gave him cooked rice and other food for his starving children, the second yielded sleeping-mats and other furnishings, the third gave gongs, the fourth great quantities of unhusked rice, the fifth many hens, the sixth a great number of pigs, and the seventh many buffaloes.

Another man, who was very poor, asked where all these desirable things came from, and was told regarding the supernatural woman of the jungle. He set out to obtain gourds, but failed to kill the reptiles in the woman's hair. She was displeased with him and sent him home with one large gourd, but it was filled with snakes and scorpions, and all except one member of his family were killed by these.

It may be that in the prototype of the food-giving gourd and the sacred food-giving and life-giving jars is the "mother pot" of so many ancient faiths. In the Hindu *Mahābhārata* the Pandava brothers have a food-yielding pot. The elder brother Yudhishtira received it from the sun-god who said:

"I shall provide thee with food for five and seven years together. . . . Accept this copper vessel. . . . As long as Pāṇchālī will hold this vessel without partaking of its contents, fruits and roots and meat and vegetables . . . shall from this day be inexhaustible."<sup>1</sup>

Another *Mahābhārata* story tells of a king named Sagara who was childless. He and his two wives adored the god Shiva as Rudra. One wife afterwards gave birth to a son and the other to a vessel "of the shape of a gourd". The king thought at first to "throw away the gourd", but a voice from the sky instructed him: "Take out the seeds from the gourd and let them be preserved with care in steaming vessels partly filled with clarified butter." The king did as he was instructed and from each vessel sprang a son.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vana Parva*, Section III.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Section CVII.



The *Mahābhārata* hero Drona was born from a pot, and his name signifies "pot born".<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hartland in his *Legend of Perseus*<sup>2</sup> gives versions of stories of pot-born children. In his *The Evolution of the Dragon* (pp. 178 *et seq.*), Professor Elliot Smith connects the Great Mother goddess with the symbolic pot, and he sees in certain Honduras pottery vessels of the Maya a blending of "the ideas of the Mother Pot" with the dragon "provided with the deer's antlers of the Eastern Asiatic dragon". In Oceania we find the "pot" represented by the mythical coco-nut which provides an inexhaustible supply of food.

In the west the "mother pot" is represented in Arthurian literature by the Holy Grail. The "witches' cauldron" is another form of the pot. In Gaelic and Welsh folklore the pot is associated with cows, serpents, frogs, dragons, birds, and pearls, and is in the care of "nine maidens".<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Evans, dealing with the protection of bodies of the dead from evil spirits, tells of the Dusun custom of sealing up corpses in burial jars for a month before interment.<sup>4</sup> When jars sufficiently large could not be obtained jars were "placed on the head of the grave". Sometimes a "tiny jar, about a foot high, will be found standing on the grave".<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Evans goes on to say that "old jars are never removed from graveyards and re-used" at Piasau as is done at Tuaran. "In some cases of jar burial, when the only jar obtainable is too small at the neck to allow the corpse to pass, but big enough to hold it otherwise, the jar is cut into two horizontally. The body is then placed

<sup>1</sup> *Adi Parva*, Sections CXXXI, CXXXIX, and CLXVIII.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, pp. 98 and 144.

<sup>3</sup> See under "Cauldrons in Celtic Mythology" in Charles Squire's *Celtic Myth and Legend* in this series.

<sup>4</sup> *Religion, Folk-Lore and Custom in North Borneo*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.



in the bottom half and the top fixed on again with resin."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Haddon, writing of the Kayan customs of Borneo, says:

"Close by the village was a small cemetery in which was one pillar tomb boldly carved with spiral designs below a human face. It was the funeral post of a chief, whose body was pressed into a jar let into the top of the pillar."<sup>2</sup>

The Kenyahs of Borneo first enclose a corpse in a coffin which is kept in the gallery of the house until the end of the period of mourning. The bones are taken out "after several months or years" and "packed into a smaller coffin or a large ovoid jar". The jar is placed "either in the hollowed upper end of a massive post", or in a "large wooden chamber".

The splitting of the jar referred to by Dr. Haddon is described more fully by Hose and McDougall who tell that the corpse is packed in "with its knees tied closely under the chin". When the time of "the feast of the bones" comes round, "the jar is reopened, the bones cleaned and replaced in the jar".

Only the richer people can afford "the luxury of a jar", and it is usually of Indo-Chinese or Chinese manufacture.

The jar-burials are commoner in the northern parts of Borneo than elsewhere, and practised by the Muruts. "It may be added," say Hose and McDougall, "that the jars used are generally valuable old jars, and that the cheap modern copies of them find little favour."<sup>3</sup>

As has been stated, the sacred jars of Borneo are reputed to have been taken from ancient tumuli. That, apparently, was why they became associated with the spirits of ancestors.

<sup>1</sup> *Religion, Folk-Lore and Custom in North Borneo*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Head Hunters, Black, White, and Brown*, London, 1901, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> *Pagan Tribes of Borneo*, Vol. II, pp. 49-50.

Pottery coffins were used in ancient Babylonia and ancient Crete. If the "pot" in cases of this kind was identified with the Great Mother, the custom recalls the words of Job (I, 21): "Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither." The Babylonians of the early period buried their dead beneath their houses as well as in vaults. Corpses were either covered with large jars or in clay compartments shaped like bath tubs. Another custom was to force the body into a long "slipper-shaped" clay coffin.<sup>1</sup>

In ancient Egypt the jar or pot appears to have acquired a reputation as a "life giver" because it was utilized in connexion with the practice of mummification. Mr. Warren R. Dawson is the first to draw attention to this phase of the embalming problem. In his article "Making a Mummy"<sup>2</sup> he shows that the body appears to have been salted in a jar and was consequently in a contracted position during the process. The skin came off the body from the neck downwards, while that of the head and face was preserved by being coated with resinous paste. In this article Mr. Dawson reproduces an ancient Egyptian pottery figure of a man "in a contracted posture squatting inside a large jar which reaches to the level of the chin".

In a later article<sup>3</sup> Mr. Dawson writes regarding another figure in the possession of a collector in Boston, Mass., U.S.A. "It has been suggested to me," he writes, "that this figure may represent a contracted burial in a pottery coffin. . . . On the other hand, the flattened base both of the figure and of the jar seems to show that its proper position is vertical and not horizontal."

<sup>1</sup> Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands*, p. 337; L. W. King, *A History of Sumer and Akkad*, pp. 26 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. XIII, 1927, pp. 40 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XIV, 1928, pp. 126 et seq.



He adds that so far as he is aware "no contracted burials with a vertical axis either with or without pottery coffins have ever been discovered in Egypt".

Other jars—the Canopic jars—were used in ancient Egypt to hold the internal organs taken from the corpse. These were dedicated to the four gods of the cardinal points, and deposited in the tomb with the mummy. It is a striking and suggestive fact that the Maya of Central America similarly made use of Canopic jars which were placed under the protection of the Bacabs, the gods of the cardinal points.<sup>1</sup>

The custom of burial in jars has been detected by archæologists at Carchemish and at Egri Kyöi in Asia Minor.<sup>2</sup>

In modern India the Hindus cremate their dead, but young infants are still being buried in jars.

The cremating Iron Age people of Western Europe and the British Isles placed the bones and ashes of their dead in burial urns, some of which were jars of considerable size.

The custom of jar burial reached South America in pre-Columbian times. Like the Melanesians of Fiji, &c., the Payagua Indians of Paraguay and the Guayana Indians of south-eastern Brazil killed elderly people who had grown weary of life. An aged one "went to his doom more joyful and gladsome than to his first nuptials". A big jar was placed ready for the corpse and it was covered with a lid of baked clay. This jar containing the body was buried in the earth.<sup>3</sup>

The magical use of a spirit-trapping jar in Senegambia, West Africa, is recorded by a French writer.

<sup>1</sup> *My Colour Symbolism in Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXXIII (1922), pp. 147 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> Hogarth, *Hittite Problems and the Excavations at Carchemish*, pp. 6 and 10. Charles and Wrench, *Troves and Studies in the Nearer East*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1917, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> R. Southey, *History of Brazil*, London, 1810, Vol. III, p. 619; R. F. Burton, *The Captivity of Hans Stade of Hesse*, London, 1874, p. 122.



When a member of the Sereres tribe wishes to kill an enemy he gets a priest-chief (*fitaure*) to lure that enemy's soul into a big red earthenware jar which is placed under a sacred tree. The man whose soul has been thus made a prisoner soon perishes.<sup>1</sup>

The Arabian and other stories of *genii*, &c., concealed in jars and bottles may have a history rooted in ancient mummification customs. Perhaps the Canopic jar, placed under the protection of a god, and holding the evil parts of the dead man, was the prototype of the jar in which a supernatural being was sealed.

As will be seen, the sacred jars of Indonesia open up an interesting line of research. Like the custom of mummification, the erection and adoration of megaliths, the deification of the pig, the frog, &c., the connexion of the kingship or chiefship with agriculture, and the arbitrary connexion of the serpent with the sky world and heavenly bodies as well as with stones, the problem presented by the miraculous jars of Borneo, Formosa, the Philippines, &c., is not to be solved by consideration of the local evidence alone or by the application of the theory of independent origin. When some ancient settlers in Indonesia deposited their dead in jars and buried these in tumuli, they were perpetuating a custom which had been practised in centres of ancient civilization. The fact that they obtained some of their jars from China does not necessarily prove that the custom of jar burial itself came from there. It may well be that the "jar cult" was imported into Indonesia from the west at a time when daring and enterprising mariners were in search of new lands in which to settle, or in which they could obtain those articles that were required elsewhere for religious and other purposes.

<sup>1</sup> L. J. B. Déranger-Féraud, *Les Peuplades de la Sénégambie*, Paris, 1879, p. 277.

Indonesia was the "highway" to the Pacific, and was consequently frequently subjected to ethnic disturbances and cultural changes. It is remarkable, however, to find that although after the passing of those peoples who settled in Melanesia and Polynesia and parts of the Americas, fresh intrusions on a large scale took place from time to time, so many traces of the early racial and cultural infusions should have survived.

As we have seen, even the most backward peoples in Indonesia sometimes reveal in their customs, beliefs, and folk tales undoubted indications of alien influences that were active at some period of their history. It does not follow therefore that we can class as "primitive" all the customs and beliefs obtaining among more or less "primitive peoples". Nor does it follow that when we find, as we do in some of the Pacific islands, highly developed creation and other myths that these are necessarily "late". It may be, indeed, that they have retained much of their original purity simply because the area into which they were introduced was isolated and therefore less liable to disturbance than the intervening areas. Not infrequently we find in other parts of the world that ancient customs, beliefs, &c., have survived in localities far separated from the area of origin, because they were carried thither by sea. It is found also that between the area of origin and the area of survival all traces of former contact have been obliterated by later racial and cultural movements.

Interesting examples of survivals may be referred to. The Guanches of the Canary Islands mummified their dead by methods remarkably like those of the ancient Egyptians of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty (1090-945 B.C.).<sup>1</sup> These people are said to have been tall and fair. They were not Egyptians, but appear to have been at one

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Dawson, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Vol. XX, Part VI.



period in contact with the "carriers" of Egyptian customs and religious beliefs.

We know that Egypt was at one time in touch with that part of the world. Sawdust from mummy packings in Egypt, taken from graves dated about 1000 B.C., has been found to be the sawdust of the Atlas cedar from Morocco, not that of the cedar of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup>

Between the Canary Islands and Egypt the traces of this ancient traffic have been obliterated.

Another instance of ancient cultural contact between widely separated areas is provided by the discovery in southern England of the Egyptian blue beads preserved in the Devizes Museum. That these were manufactured in Egypt is quite certain. Their colour is due to the fact that there are lime and soda in the Egyptian sandstone which was used in their manufacture. Molten copper poured on that sandstone produces a blue colour. When the same process of manufacture was adopted in Europe, the sandstone of which does not contain the soda, the beads assumed a shade of green. When, therefore, we find ancient green copper-glazed beads (called by archæologists beads of "vitreous paste") in different parts of Britain, the reasonable conclusion to draw is that among the "carriers" of the Egyptian beads into ancient England were artizans who were acquainted with the method of manufacturing them. From these artizans the local artizans received their knowledge, and using local sandstone produced not blue but green beads.

The blue beads found in the Stonehenge area were manufactured in Egypt between 1500 and 1250 B.C. There are no records of Egyptian contact with England during or after that period. We cannot trace the route by which the beads reached England. Probably they

<sup>1</sup> *The Cairo Scientific Journal*, Vol. III, No. 32.



were carried by seafarers direct from the Mediterranean.

In Indonesia we can, as has been indicated, detect fragmentary evidence of cultural and racial "drifts" towards the islands of the Pacific and towards pre-Columbian America, and such evidence is of undoubted interest and importance. It should not surprise us to find that it is somewhat slight in certain areas. The really remarkable fact is that even fragmentary evidence has survived anywhere in a group of islands, large and small, which has been time and again "criss-crossed" by cultures later than those which have left a more permanent impress in localities farther beyond.

The process of "culture mixing", such as is revealed by the customs and beliefs connected with the sacred jars of Indonesia, has ever been active, however, in many areas. Intruding peoples may have caused the destruction of religious systems when they introduced new systems of different character—systems either "higher" or "lower" than those they have attacked. But certain elements of the shattered structures have tended to survive, and these, like fragments of unmistakable pottery, or random implements and weapons, bear eloquent testimony of former culture influences as well as of "old unhappy (and happy) far-off things and battles (or voyages) long ago".



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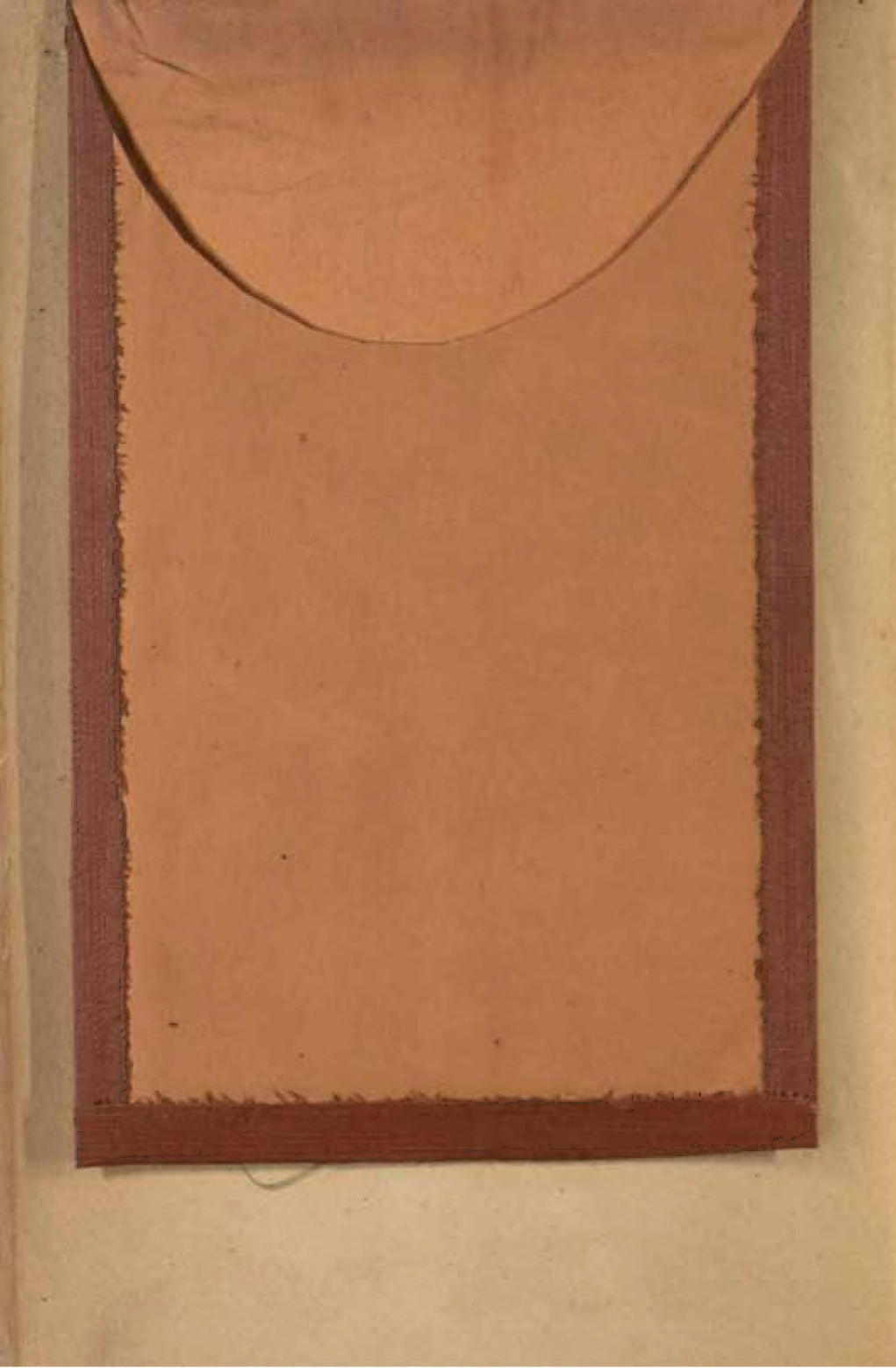


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